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**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**DIRECTORS**  
**OF THE**  
**AFRICAN INSTITUTION,**  
**&c. &c.**



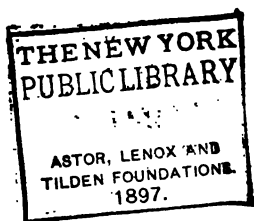
**SPECIAL**  
**R E P O R T**  
**OF THE**  
**DIRECTORS**  
**OF THE**  
**African Institution,**  
**MADE**  
**AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, ON THE**  
**13th OF APRIL, 1815,**  
**RESPECTING**  
**THE ALLEGATIONS**  
**CONTAINED IN**  
**A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "A LETTER TO WILLIAM WIL-**  
**BERFORCE, ESQ. &c. BY R. THORPE, ESQ. &c."**

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**1815.**  
Wm





1897



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## ERRATA.

- P. 36. l. 14.** for *the injustice in this case was*, read, *if there was any injustice in this case, which is denied, it would have been.*
- P. 73. l. 23.** for *annexed specimens*, read, *specimens now presented to the meeting.*
- P. 81. l. 16.** for *Bessao*, read, *Bissao.*

# R E P O R T,

8c. 8c.

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**B**EFORE the Directors proceed to comment on the particulars of Mr. Thorpe's publication, it may be expedient to request the attention of the Subscribers to some important considerations respecting the nature and difficulties of the task which they have undertaken. They found themselves, from the very first, embarrassed between the wish which, on the one hand, they felt fully to discharge the duty imposed on them, and the impossibility, on the other, of doing this in any adequate manner, without going into such a length of detail as would be likely to exhaust the patience of the most indulgent audience. "To draw up a full and detailed Report on all such parts of Mr. Thorpe's publication as in any manner concern the conduct and proceedings of this Institution, or the character of its members, or of any persons employed in its service" (such are the terms of the Resolution adopted by the Board), would indeed be an Herculean labour; for it may be truly affirmed, that almost in every paragraph of Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet some charge is made, or some imputation cast, either on the Institution itself or on



several of its most active members. It ought also to be remembered that the alleged misconduct applies to a considerable number of individuals, and extends through a period of near twenty-five years. Above all (to explain the difficulty of the Board still more clearly by a specific instance), it should be considered, that in order fully to disprove a short and simple proposition, such for instance as that serious charge contained in Mr. Thorpe's sixth page, that cultivation in the Colony of Sierra Leone had been retarded by the Sierra Leone Company, it would be necessary, not merely to repel the charge in the same general terms in which it was preferred, but to exhibit the various proofs and authorities by which it might be incontestably shewn, that, from the first settlement of the Colony of Sierra Leone, amidst many and great obstacles, cultivation had been the object of the Company's anxious and unremitted attention. To establish, therefore, even this single point, as it might be satisfactorily and decisively established by a detail of particulars—by extracts from the original records, journals, correspondences, and reports, extending through so many years—would alone constitute a compilation, which, though rendered as concise as possible, would occupy more time and attention than the Board dares venture to hope the Subscribers would be willing to spare to this discussion. Yet, after all, this, though undoubtedly an important point, would be but one of the many assertions which the Directors feel it their duty to deny, would be but one of the numerous charges which they can positively and entirely repel.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the earnest wish which the Directors feel to execute completely the task they have undertaken, they fear that they must still leave many mistatements of fact unrefuted, and many unfounded insinuations unrepelled. But they confidently trust that the statements they shall make will decisively establish the utter groundlessness of those charges which are the most important: and that not only the Subscribers, but the public at large, will learn from the specimens which the Report shall afford them, what estimate to form of other charges and insinuations which either have proceeded, or may hereafter proceed, from the same source, against individuals of hitherto unblemished characters.

The pamphlet of Mr. Thorpe commences with an attack on the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, whose conduct, and even whose motives, he arraigns in the strongest and most unqualified terms. In justice to that body, it may be proper to specify who were the individuals composing it. The Chairman and leading member of it, from the first institution of the Company to its final dissolution, was Mr. Henry Thornton, who is well known to have devoted a large portion of his time, and the powers of his active, discriminating, and upright mind to the superintendence of its concerns. It fell chiefly to him to examine and select persons for the Company's service abroad, to conduct the correspondence with the Colony, and to prepare the Reports that were made to the Proprietors, or which were afterwards printed. The Deputy Chairmen were, successively, Philip Sisson, Esq.; Charles Grant, Esq. now Chairman of

the East-India Company ; and Lord Teignmouth. Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards Lord Barham ; Admiral Sir George Young ; and Thomas Clarkson, Esq. were efficient Directors until they quitted London ; and the Hon. Edward James Eliot, to the time of his death. Besides these, the following gentlemen were in the direction during almost the whole period of the Company's existence:—W. Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. ; Thomas Babington, Esq. M. P. ; Thomas Furley Forster, Esq. ; Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. ; John Inglis, Esq. ; John Kingston, Esq. ; Samuel Parker, Esq. ; Edward Parry, Esq. ; John Prinsep, Esq. ; Granville Sharpe, Esq. ; and George Wolff, Esq.

The various statements which have been laid before Parliament and the public, on the subject of Sierra Leone, were drawn up and sanctioned by these well-known and distinguished characters, whom it is unnecessary to defend from the imputation of either having practised a deception on the public, or of having been actuated by corrupt or improper motives. They contributed, some of them largely, from their own funds, to the general object ; and the situation which they held as Directors, was attended with no pecuniary advantage. It was made a bye law from the first, that no member of their body should derive any emolument from the Company, beyond the dividend which he might receive in common with all other proprietors.

The reports and statements of these individuals may be referred to as completely negating the charges and imputations of Mr. Thorpe ; and as Mr. Thorpe did not visit the Colony until three years

and a half after the Company had ceased to govern it, and his residence there continued only for twenty-one months, namely from July 1811 to March 1813, his testimony cannot be regarded as of much moment when thus opposed. Whatever credit might be due to his testimony, when speaking of things within the sphere of his observation, yet of what passed during the Sierra Leone Company's administration of the Colony he could have no personal knowledge. His representations, therefore, loose and vague as they are, can hardly be allowed to weigh materially against the deliberate and recorded statements of the gentlemen who have been named, themselves actors in the business, and possessing full access to every official document, and to the best sources of oral information.

Here, therefore, the case of the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company might be safely left. It may, nevertheless, be expedient, with the view of fully appreciating the value of Mr. Thorpe's testimony, to examine somewhat more in detail the specific charges which he makes against that body.

1. Mr. Thorpe affirms (p. 3), that the Sierra Leone Company "had a monopoly of the trade." The Board presumes that he means the trade of the Colony, although the preceding paragraph (p. 2) would seem to imply that he meant the "trade of the west coast of Africa." But had Mr. Thorpe merely consulted the Act incorporating the Sierra Leone Company, and this it surely was his duty to have done, he must have known that they possessed no commercial monopoly whatever; a

clause having been introduced into that Act, which had the effect of preventing any such monopoly even within their own territory.

But as it was possible, that although the Company possessed no monopoly by law, they might, nevertheless, in point of fact, monopolize the colonial trade, the Directors have pointed their inquiries to this object;—and they have ascertained to their entire satisfaction, that even within the colony of Sierra Leone itself, the Company had to contend from the first with rival traders, both British and American; that they never possessed the power of excluding merchandize from the settlement, whence-soever, or by whomsoever it might be imported; and that, as there was a frequent resort to the river Sierra Leone of ships both from Europe and America; and, as many slave factories were planted in the immediate vicinity of the Colony, whence goods might easily be introduced; the Company could not have retained the colonial trade, except by regulating their profits on a more moderate scale than would suit private adventurers. In point of fact, it appears that the Company continued to carry on trade for many years, less with a view to their own benefit, than to that of the infant colony; and they even held out inducements to persons of probity to settle as merchants at Sierra Leone, in the hope of being thus enabled gradually to relinquish their commercial pursuits altogether, without material disadvantage to the settlement.

2. Notwithstanding this alleged monopoly, Mr. Thorpe observes (p. 2), that the Company “sent

almost to bankruptcy from causes enveloped in *mystery*."

The Company, as has been seen, had no *monopoly*. The charge of *mystery* is equally unfounded. The Act of Incorporation required that a general meeting of the Proprietors should be held at least once every year; and that an account of the debts, credits, and capital of the Company, should be annually published in the Gazette. These requisitions were regularly fulfilled. The general meetings of the Proprietors were usually numerous and respectable, and to them a full and detailed Report of the events of the preceding year was made, accompanied by a statement of the Company's funds. The substance of these Reports was printed from time to time, viz. in 1794, 1795, 1798, 1801, 1804, and 1808, so as to form a history of the Colony and of the Company, from the commencement of the Institution in 1791, to the transfer of the Colony to the Crown, on the 1st of January, 1808.

Of each of the printed Reports, six in number; about 2000 copies were distributed among the Proprietors. Of the Report of 1794, containing a full history of the first two years and a half of the Company, a large edition was also printed for public sale in an octavo volume, by Phillips, of George Yard, Lombard Street, of whom it may still be obtained.

Besides this, four parliamentary inquiries have taken place into the affairs of the Company, one at the bar of the House of Lords, in 1799; another, in a Committee of the House of Commons, in 1802,

of which Lord Castlereagh was chairman, and Mr. Pitt an active member; a third, in a Committee of the House of Commons, in 1803-4, of which the Marquis of Lansdowne, then Lord Henry Petty, was chairman, and of which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Vansittart, was an efficient member; and a fourth, in a Committee of the House of Commons, in 1807, of which the Marquis of Buckingham, then Lord Temple, was chairman.

The Reports of these Committees, with the evidence delivered before them, and also the evidence taken at the bar of the House of Lords, were printed for the use of the members.

Under these circumstances, with what colour of truth can it be said that any *mystery* has enveloped the affairs of the Company or the conduct of the Directors? Indeed, the character of the Directors would of itself have been a guarantee against any corrupt appropriation of the funds entrusted to them, even if full details of their transactions had not from time to time been laid before their constituents, and also before Parliament and the public.

The causes which led to the absorption of the capital of the Company are in no degree involved in mystery. They are plain and obvious, and have been clearly stated on various occasions. The capital joint stock of the Company was originally 234,000*l*. Before the first two years and a half had past, that is to say, before the 1st of July, 1794, the Company had already expended near 100,000*l*. in maintaining the necessary establishment of Euro-

peans; in subsisting, for a great part of that time, 1100 settlers; in providing temporary accommodation on shipboard, for their servants and others, until houses should be prepared; in the erection of the necessary dwelling-houses and public buildings; in allotting to the Colonists their lands, and cutting roads through all parts of the settlement; and in the various contingent expenses, both at home and abroad, to which such an undertaking is necessarily liable. To this they had to add, the heavy loss arising from the destruction, by an accidental fire in the harbour of Sierra Leone, of a store-ship of 800 tons burthen, used as a floating factory, with a large assortment of merchandize on board, valued at 18,000*l*.

Much of the expense which had been incurred in establishing the Colony, previous to the period that has been specified, would not indeed have proved eventually a loss to the Company, had it not been, that a few months afterwards, namely, in September 1794, the Colony was captured by a French squadron, which burnt every house of every kind that the Company had erected, captured eleven vessels of different sizes from 50 to 300 tons, and carried off or destroyed merchandize to a very large amount.

With a capital thus diminished to about one third of its original amount, the Company had to commence their operations anew; to re-erect the houses, warehouses, and other public buildings, that had been destroyed, and to maintain all the establishments which were necessary for the government, defence, and subsistence of the Colony; for the pre-



servation of health, for the education of youth, and for public religious instruction ; besides sustaining various heavy commercial losses, in consequence of the war which then prevailed. All these expenses they bore for six years longer ; namely, till 1800, without any aid whatever from any quarter. The Colonists contributed nothing towards defraying them ; and it was then for the first time that the Company applied for and obtained a share, at first small, but which was afterwards enlarged, of the public bounty, which, for nearly a century, had been annually bestowed on other Establishments on the coast of Africa, erected with far different views from those which actuated the Sierra Leone Company ; namely, for promoting and protecting the accumulated evils of the Slave Trade.

The Sierra Leone Company thought, and not without reason, that while such large sums of the public money had been expended in spreading barbarism and desolation in that country, they might fairly claim some aid from Parliament for the maintenance of an establishment which was formed with the express design of counteracting these evils, and which, without such aid, must have been abandoned \*.

Two of the inquiries already referred to as having taken place in committees of the House of Commons, originated in the applications of the Company for a grant of money to defray the expense of maintaining the Colony. That of 1803-4, went into the exami-

\* See Appendix A.

nation at great length, even of hostile evidence, and particularly that of Captain, now Admiral, Hallowell; and its Report may be referred to as conclusively proving, that down to that period there had been no deviation, on the part of the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, from the professed objects of that institution, and that they were not chargeable with any misapplication of the funds entrusted to them. On the contrary, this Committee after a most laborious investigation, give it as their opinion, that "unless a transfer of the Colony to the Crown should be effected, and until it take place, there does not appear *any better means* of discharging the obligations of Government towards the Nova Scotians and Maroons, or of *obtaining the other beneficial purposes proposed by the Institution of the Colony, than by supporting the Company's Government, as now established.*" \*

\* In justice to the Sierra Leone Company, it ought to be stated, that they had incurred very heavy expenses by taking under their protection and management a large number of Blacks from Nova Scotia. These had formerly been Slaves, who, having joined the British standard in the American Revolutionary War, and having been taken to Nova-Scotia after its termination, had petitioned the British Government to remove them to a more congenial climate, just about the time of the founding of the Colony of Sierra Leone. At a subsequent period, the Company also received, at the express and earnest entreaty of his Majesty's Government, a considerable number of Jamaica Maroons. To both of these bodies, it was declared by the Committee of the House of Commons, and acknowledged by the Members of the Administration, that the British Government was bound by every consideration of

3. Mr. Thorpe states it (p. 3.) as matter of charge against the Company, that "their best servants were obliged to seek establishments under the native chiefs." This was illustrated by a private communication which Mr. Thorpe made to the Board, signifying that the Company had "forced many of their servants into the Slave Trade." The meaning of the passage is indeed explained by the note annexed to it, which states, that some of these best servants of the Company "returned to the Colony *after* the Abolition Act passed."—The Directors of the Company themselves had already stated the circumstance with much concern. In the evidence laid by them before Parliament in 1802, and also in 1803-4, is this passage:—"The slave trade, by the high profits which it presents, has tempted some settlers at Sierra Leone, and even a few individuals who had gone out in the Company's employ, either to em-

justice and good faith to continue its support and protection. And the same Committee in 1804, after a minute inquiry and hearing every objection which could be raised to the measure, united in opinion with the Directors of the Company, that it would be expedient, with a view to the accomplishment of the objects for which the Colony was founded, that it should be transferred to the Crown, and distinctly stated in its Report, that, on account of the obligation to provide for the Nova-Scotians and Maroons, independently of all considerations of the civilization and improvement of Africa, "it was doubtful whether the evacuation of the Colony would not lead to expense as great as that with which its support would be attended."—See Report of a Committee of the House of Commons in 1803-4, p. 7. and the evidence of John King, Esq. Under Secretary of State, annexed to it, p. 37.

bark in the service of slave factories, or to enter on their own account into that traffic." The persons, therefore, whom Mr. Thorpe ambiguously describes as the Company's best servants, "seeking establishments under native chiefs," are, in fact, those whom the Directors of the Company more properly describe, as having been tempted to quit their service, and embark in the slave trade, by the expectation of high profits, although, when they entered into the service of the Sierra Leone Company, they had subscribed a bond, with a heavy penalty attached to it, not to engage in that trade. But this calamitous circumstance Mr. Thorpe contrives to convert into a grave charge against the Company. And these men, voluntarily embarking in the slave trade, in violation not only of their solemn engagement to the Company, but of every just, humane, and beneficent principle, are styled by him the Company's *best* servants. This sympathy with slave traders is a striking feature in the pamphlet of Mr. Thorpe.

4. Mr. Thorpe charges the Sierra Leone Company with failing in their engagements to the Nova-Scotian Settlers.—For this charge there does not appear to be any just foundation. On the contrary, the Company appear to have acted with a scrupulous attention to their engagements to this body of people.

They promised to give twenty acres of land to each man, ten to each woman, and five to each child, under various conditions: the only one of which they have ever required the fulfilment, has been the payment of a small quitrent of a shilling an acre.

Of the quantity of land thus promised, one fifth part was allotted to the whole body of the Colonists, before the first year of their residence at Sierra Leone had expired; and in the mean time, they were entirely supported at the Company's expense. But even this fifth part has proved more than sufficient for them. The remaining four-fifths have been repeatedly offered to them, but the offer has been for obvious reasons generally declined. Having already received more land than they required for cultivation, it would have been a mere burthen to have received a farther allotment, subject, as it would have been, to the payment of the quitrent. The right, however, to the remaining four-fifths of the quantity of land originally promised them, was carefully preserved to the Nova Scotians. *This was stipulated by the Sierra Leone Company*, and agreed to by his Majesty's Government, when the transfer of the Colony to the Crown was negotiated; and the King's Governor was accordingly instructed by the Secretary of State to satisfy the claims of the Nova Scotians for further allotments, to the full extent of the Sierra Leone Company's promises.

Here, however, the Board is enabled to produce testimony to which Mr. Thorpe cannot object. On the 16th of May, 1812, he himself addressed a letter to Governor Maxwell, in the following terms :—

“ My dear Sir,

“ Mr. Huddle delivered to me by your Excellency's desire, an unfinished draft of a grant for

Crown Lands, and other papers relative to the claims of persons in this Colony.

“*Lord Liverpool seems only anxious to have the engagements of the Sierra Leone Company with the Settlers from Nova Scotia fulfilled. I should, therefore, advise your issuing a proclamation, desiring all Nova Scotia Settlers, who had entered into any engagement with the Sierra Leone Company, to send in their claims; that they may be considered and fulfilled as far as they are just, and that every claim not sent in before the 1st of May, 1813, will be considered void and of no effect. By this means you will pay immediate attention to Lord Liverpool's letter; you will accurately know what land is vacant on the 1st of May 1813; what claims you have to settle, what encouragement you can give, and at the same time convince the people of your readiness to secure every person, worthy of your protection, in their property and privileges.*”

But whence could this anxiety on the part of Lord Liverpool have arisen, except from the representations of the Sierra Leone Company, whom Mr. Thorpe accuses of infidelity to their engagements? And what effect did the measure proposed by Mr. Thorpe produce? Not above three or four applications grounded upon it, appear to have been made to the Colonial Government.

5. But Mr. Thorpe, while he admits that land to the extent of a fifth part of the quantity promised them, was allotted to the Nova-Scotian Settlers, states, “that implements to cultivate even this fifth part

were difficult to find, and too expensive to procure."

—This allegation is also without foundation. At no period, while the Sierra Leone Company continued to govern the Colony, does there appear to have been any want of implements of husbandry or of tools of any kind. Prone as the Nova-Scotian Settlers ever have been, among other infirmities to be traced but too naturally to their former debased condition of slavery, to indulge in trivial and unreasonable complaints, there is no trace to be found in any of their representations, not even in their petition which Dr. Thorpe has annexed to his pamphlet, of a want either of mechanical tools or of implements of husbandry. But independently of this circumstance, the Board has had the most satisfactory evidence laid before it, that during the whole period of the Company's administration, no want of implements was experienced in the Colony. Mr. Thorpe appears to be the only individual who has ever attributed the backwardness of cultivation at Sierra Leone to this cause.

6. Mr. Thorpe farther maintains, not only that implements could with difficulty be procured to till the soil, but that the Company, for certain interested motives, actually discouraged cultivation in the Colony. Cultivation was "retarded" by them (p. 6); nay, it was not even "attempted." (p. 49.)

It must be obvious, however, and the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, who were men known to possess large, enlightened, and liberal views, were not likely to be blind to this truth, that their own prosperity was intimately linked with that of the

settlement, the basis of which must be the cultivation of the soil. That they were thoroughly penetrated with this sentiment, is shewn by various dispatches which they addressed to their Governor and Council, who, on their part, appear to have been uniformly guided by similar views.

Indeed, the statement of Mr. Thorpe on this point, is utterly unfounded. The Board has received the clearest and most unequivocal testimony, that from the day the Colony was first planted to the moment of its transfer to the Crown, the Sierra Leone Company and their servants exerted themselves, to the utmost of their power, to promote a spirit of cultivation both among the settlers and the surrounding natives.

Advantages and facilities of various kinds were held out to such Settlers as should fix upon their farms and engage in agriculture. Premiums were annually proposed to them, to encourage the building of farm-houses, the rearing of cattle, pigs, &c. the raising of all kinds of provisions, and the cultivation of articles of exportable produce; which premiums were continued even to the very last year of the Company's connection with the Colony.

An eminent botanist, Dr. Afzelius, who now stands high in the University of Upsal, was employed, at a very considerable expense, in investigating the natural history of Sierra Leone, and in pointing out and rearing useful plants; and under his superintendence a garden of experiment was undertaken; while experimental farms were also set on foot by the Company, and even by the principal servants of the



Company at their own expense, with a view both to stimulate the Colonists, and to instruct them how valuable articles of tropical production might be cultivated.

Besides this, a large collection of valuable plants from the East and West Indies, and the South Seas, was procured from the King's garden at Kew, and sent to Sierra Leone by the Company, accompanied by a regular gardener. And these having been completely destroyed, as well as the garden of experiment, by the French squadron which, in 1794, laid waste the Colony; in the succeeding year, one of the Company's vessels was fitted out, at a large expense, for the sole purpose of repairing this loss, and procuring a farther supply of congenial plants and seeds from the island of St. Thomas, and other places to the south of Sierra Leone.

In short, every thing appears to have been done which the Company could do to promote cultivation; and in whatever degree it has been impeded, the impediments appear not to have arisen from discouragements on the part of the Company or their servants, but from circumstances which were wholly beyond their controul.

The grand impediment which, from first to last, obstructed the views of the Company and of their agents, in respect to the cultivation of the soil, was the indolence of the Settlers, and their indisposition to this species of employment. In letters written at various periods by several most intelligent and respectable observers, this indisposition was stated to be so strong, that if any other mode of sub-

sistence, requiring less bodily exertion, could be found, the pursuit of agriculture was infallibly neglected. Hence the Slave Trade presented an irresistible attraction to many of the Settlers, who quitted the Colony, and fixed themselves in slave factories. Many others, who did not actually become slave traders, preferred the easier life of carrying on a petty trade in rice, camwood, and live stock, with the natives in the adjacent rivers, to the cultivation of their farms. Others rather employed themselves in fishing; a considerable number as mechanics; and many as labourers on the public works.

Under these circumstances, it is not very surprising that the cultivation of land, in a colony the whole population of which, previous to the year 1801, never exceeded 1200 persons of all ages, and, down to the period of the transfer of the Colony, never amounted to 2000, should not have been very extensive.

But notwithstanding the general indisposition of the Colonists to this species of employment, so steadily were the efforts of the Company directed to promote it, that a considerable quantity of land was actually brought into cultivation, and far more progress would doubtless have been made, but for events which the Board would have imagined were too notorious to be overlooked by Mr. Thorpe.

In the year 1800, an effort of some of the Colonists to possess themselves of the supreme power, ended in an insurrection, which, both in its progress and effects, was very unfavourable to agriculture.

In the years 1801 and 1802, the Colony was

twice attacked by a combination of the surrounding natives; and although those attacks, (which were brought on, partly by the zeal the Company had manifested for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, partly by the protection they had afforded to fugitive slaves, partly by the undefined apprehensions which the progress of the Colony had produced in the minds of the native chiefs, and partly by the hope of plunder), were repelled, yet the alarm created by them was such, as to lead to a *total abandonment of cultivation*. The Colonists quitted the country, and took refuge in the towns from the dangers which were supposed to await those who might remain dispersed on their farms. In consequence of this state of things, and an idea that the Colony would be evacuated, cultivation was entirely suspended; nor was it renewed until nearly three years afterwards, when the determination of Parliament to maintain the Colony was made known there. Before that time, almost every trace of former cultivation had been obliterated,—a circumstance which will be very intelligible to those who know the rapidity with which, in tropical climates, weeds and brushwood resume the empire of the soil, if the labour of the cultivator be intermitted even for a short time. The period of inaction, also, which thus intervened, produced, both in respect to morals and industry, a very unfavourable effect on the general habits of the Colonists; many of whom became again almost entirely dependant on the Company for their subsistence, and thus added greatly to the colonial expenditure; and not a few of whom migrated to slave factories.

Very considerable efforts were now made by the Company's servants, to restore industry and cultivation, and with more success than, under the peculiarly discouraging circumstances which had taken place, could have been expected. The Colony remained in their hands only three years after it was known there that the result of the parliamentary inquiry was a resolution to maintain it; and in that time, such were the exertions made to repair the utter devastation which had taken place, that when Mr. Thompson arrived at Sierra Leone, in the month of July 1808, he was struck with the general appearance of plenty and prosperity which pervaded it. His words, in a letter to the Secretary of State, Lord Castlereagh, dated 27th July, 1808, are these:—

“ I have the honour to report to your Lordship that I found the appearance of the Colony in many respects more favourable than I had any reason to expect. The quantity of stock of all kinds which fill the streets of the settlement, and the very respectable appearance of the inhabitants, are strong indications of prosperity, and of the increase of domestic industry.”

If the Colony afterwards declined, so that when Mr. Thorpe was there, four years afterwards, the same appearances of plenty and prosperity were no longer visible; this cannot invalidate the above testimony of Mr. Thompson, to whose authority the Board the rather appeals, because Mr. Thorpe himself will admit him to be a competent witness; nor can it be made a charge against the Sierra Leone Company,

who had ceased to govern the Colony ; nor against the African Institution, who never have had any share in its government at all. But this point will be considered hereafter.

Mr. Thorpe would insinuate that the Company discouraged cultivation in the Colony, for the sake of the rice trade which they carried on for its supply. The Company did indeed take great pains to supply the Colony with rice and cattle, whenever circumstances like those which have now been mentioned rendered such a supply peculiarly needful. They also made a point of purchasing the rice which was offered for sale by the natives, with a view of encouraging their industry, as well as redeeming the pledge they had given of affording them a market for their commodities ; but there was no branch of their trade by which they appear to have sustained heavier losses, than by this. It proved almost uniformly a losing traffic.

7. The next point, as it respects the Sierra Leone Company, to which the attention of the Board has been called, is that of civilization.

" In civilization," Mr. Thorpe observes (p. 4), " they proceeded so far as to send two persons to Teemboo, a few days' walk from Sierra Leone, and educated half a dozen African boys in England, sufficiently for common clerkships in the Colony." He even does not scruple to affirm (p. 49) that civilization was *not attempted* by the Company.

After a thorough investigation of the evidence which relates to this part of the subject, it is due to

the Sierra Leone Company and their agents to say, that the promotion of civilization, both within the Colony and among the surrounding natives of Africa, was not only never lost sight of, but appears to have been strenuously pursued by them during the whole period of their administration.

As early as the month of January 1793, only ten months after the foundation-stone of the Colony was laid, there were three hundred children under instruction at Sierra Leone, and until the Company ceased to govern it, the instruction of children never ceased to be an object of their anxious care. On this object alone they expended, on the average, at Sierra Leone, from 500*l.* to 1000*l.* a year, during the sixteen years they held the Colony; and the education of Africans in England cost them not less than from 3,500*l.* to 4000*l.* As to the effect produced by their efforts, it might be sufficient to refer to the Report of Lord Castlereagh's Committee. It is as follows:—

“Of the progress of education within the Settlement, your Committee have had satisfactory proof laid before them.

“Of the acquirements of the native children, who have been removed to this country for education, your Committee have been able to judge by their own personal observation; and they have traced with peculiar satisfaction, not only the extent of their information, but the striking degree of natural talent which these children have displayed.”

It seems scarcely possible that Mr. Thorpe should have been ignorant of the fact, that from the commencement of the Colony, to the time of its being

transferred to the Crown, the Company had maintained schools there, to which the children of the Colonists were gratuitously admitted; especially almost every Nova-Scotian youth in the Colony, both male and female, and many Maroons, whom he must have been in the daily habit of seeing, had received in those schools the elementary parts of education.

It seems also difficult to conceive how Mr. Thorpe should have been ignorant of the fact that the Company had gone to very considerable expense in educating natives of Africa, both in Africa and in England. The chiefs around Sierra Leone were earnestly invited, from the first, to send their children to that place for education, and many were sent. The sense of insecurity produced by the destruction of the Colony by the French, in 1794, induced the chiefs for a time to withdraw the children. In no long time, however, their confidence revived; and a school of about forty children, exclusively natives, many of them belonging to persons of influence in the vicinity, was formed in Freetown, at the Company's entire expense, and under the peculiar superintendence of the Governor. From this number, twenty-five were selected, including two Nova Scotians, and brought over to England in 1799; and in 1801 and 1802, about eight more, of whom three or four were Maroons, were also brought over to this country. Here they remained for about six years, at the expense of the Sierra Leone Company aided by the private contributions of its Directors and their immediate friends, until the prevalence of pulmonary complaints among them, which in several instances proved fatal, rendered it expedient to discontinue the plan.

The course of education pursued with these youths, may be best seen by a reference to the following evidence, annexed to the Report just alluded to.

“ Mr. Greaves stated, that he lives at Clapham, and has the care of the Africans now in England for education, as their schoolmaster. He has had other boys under his care, but at present is charged solely with the education of the children in question. They were placed under his care about two years and a half ago. Their ages are from ten to seventeen. He instructs them in reading, writing; and arithmetic, and one of them, who is the most forward, in mensuration. Almost all of them can speak and read English tolerably well. Pains are taken to give them information on general subjects, as history, geography, natural philosophy, and mechanics. He had not observed any inferiority of capacity, allowance being made for the deficiencies under which they laboured when they came under his care. They converse together in their own language, but more frequently in English. Three of the children, having learned to read and write, have been put out to learn boat-building; and it is proposed to place the others as they get forward, to learn different trades. They also learn various useful arts within the school. They retain a strong attachment to their own country; but do not appear impatient to return home till their education is completed, being sensible of the advantages to be derived therefrom. The children shew a great disposition to adopt the principles of the



Christian Religion, and several of them have written letters to their parents in Africa, expressive of their opinions on this subject."

But all these various and expensive efforts to promote civilization in Africa, Mr. Thorpe describes "as giving education to half a dozen African boys." He adds, indeed, (p. 4.) "They proceeded so far in civilization, as," besides educating these half dozen African boys, "to send two persons to Teemboo, a few days' walk from Sierra Leone."

Although Mr. Thorpe chooses to speak thus contemptuously of the journey to Teemboo executed by Messrs. Watt and Winterbottom, no one can peruse its details without a strong impression both of its difficulty and importance. By a reference to the map of their route, it will be seen, that the distance they actually travelled by land, on foot, in going and returning, independent of sea and river carriage, was about 500 miles, in that country a journey of at least from thirty to thirty-five days. They were the first Europeans who ever penetrated so far in that particular direction; and the account of their journey is so interesting, that it is much to be regretted it has not been given to the world\*. But besides the journey to Teemboo, various other journeys and voyages were undertaken in different directions, at the Company's expense, for the express purpose not merely of prosecuting inquiry, but of enlightening the minds of the native chiefs as to their true interests and those of their subjects;

\* See Appendix, B.

inciting and encouraging them to abandon the Slave Trade and engage in Cultivation ; and inducing them to send their children to school at Sierra Leone, or to admit schools among them. And it further appears, that even the trading voyages undertaken, on the part of the Company, from Sierra Leone were usually connected with these objects, and that persevering efforts were made to render the visits of the native chiefs to the Colony subservient to the same ends.

It would swell this Report to a most inconvenient size if the Directors were to attempt to detail the large mass of evidence which has fully satisfied their minds on this point ; which has convinced them that the labours of the Sierra Leone Company to promote the object of African civilization were great and unwearied. But the obstacles with which they had to struggle, among which may be noted, as the most material, the insubordination of the settlers and the temptations and influence of the Slave Trade, were exceedingly powerful, perhaps insuperable : and it ought not to be imputed as blame, that they did not effect impossibilities. Indeed, in justice to the prudence and discernment of the projectors of the undertaking, it should be remarked, that when the Company was first formed, a confident expectation was entertained of a speedy Abolition ; an expectation which, as far as they were concerned with the administration of the Colony, ended in total disappointment ; as they had to contend with this formidable and pernicious enemy from its very first foundation down to Jan. 1, 1808. On that day the British Slave Trade was abolished on the Coast of Africa ;

and on the same day the Colony of Sierra Leone was transferred to the Crown.

8. In a similar spirit of invidious misrepresentation, Mr. Thorpe complains also of the inattention paid to religion and morality by the Sierra Leone Company. "They had a Church of England clergyman for a few months, and a missionary for a few years, but they had methodist teachers and preachers in abundance," (p. 4.)

Those who have attempted to provide Chaplains for foreign stations will know how to appreciate the difficulty of the task in the case of a Colony like Sierra Leone, which had a character for insecurity and unhealthiness beyond that of most others. In point of fact, great exertions appear to have been made by the Sierra Leone Company to keep up that part of their establishment which was connected with moral and religious instruction; but it was found absolutely impossible to procure a succession of suitable clergymen of the Church of England. And it may serve in some degree to exculpate the Sierra Leone Company from blame in this respect, that although the Colony has been for upwards of seven years in the hands of Government, and although the salary and advantages of the Chaplain have been materially increased since the transfer, no such clergymen have yet been induced to accept the situation.

When the Colony was first projected, two clergymen of the Church of England, of eminent piety, the Rev. Nathaniel Gilbert and the Rev. Melville Horne, were engaged as Chaplains. The former continued

in the service of the Company for about a year and a half; and the latter for about two years. They were forced to quit the Colony chiefly on account of ill health. Their place was supplied for some time by two persons who had gone out as schoolmasters to the Colony (Mr. Jones and Mr. Garvin) until, in 1794, the Rev. Mr. Langlands, a minister of the Church of Scotland, was appointed Chaplain. He died, however, a few weeks after his arrival in the Colony. After again vainly seeking for a Clergyman of the Church of England to fill the situation; in 1795, another Scotch Clergyman was appointed Chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Clark, who continued to labour among the Colonists, and particularly among their children, with great assiduity, for nearly three years, when he also died. The Rev. Mr. Brunton, a Missionary, continued to perform the duties of Chaplain after Mr. Clark's death till the year 1801. Since 1802, the office has been filled by a succession of ministers of the Lutheran Church, supplied by the pious care of the Church Missionary Society. And even during the temporary want of any clerical person to perform the public services of Divine Worship, these were always regularly performed, either by the Governor himself, or by some respectable person of his appointment.

The Sierra Leone Company, when every effort to engage clergymen of the Church of England in their service had proved fruitless, would probably have had no objection to employ respectable Methodist teachers and preachers, could they have been procured, to supply the means of religious instruction to

the Colony. In point of fact, however, it does not appear that they sent out any such preachers themselves. Many of the Settlers had indeed been connected with the Methodist Society, while they were still under the immediate care of Government in Nova Scotia; and there were among them several of their own colour who officiated as preachers; but who were not either dependant on the Company, or employed or paid by them. The Methodist Society in England, and other religious Societies, have, it is true, at different times sent Missionaries of their own body to Sierra Leone; and to these the Company were ever forward to afford their countenance and protection. And although the climate of Africa has proved very adverse to the success of these Missions, many valuable lives having been sacrificed in the attempt to establish them; and the influence of the Slave Trade has been particularly unfavourable to their progress; yet much has been done and is now doing by their means.

Mr. Thorpe recommends it to Mr. Wilberforce (p. 40.) to "erect the first church with a steeple and bell that ever was built for our regular worship in Africa." This would seem to imply that no church had ever been erected at Sierra Leone; whereas the fact, on examination, appears to be, that one of the first erections at Sierra Leone in the year 1792, was that of a temporary church, capable of containing about 350 persons. In 1793 one was erected of more durable materials, capable of containing 750 persons; but this was destroyed by the French in 1794, who left not a vestige of it remaining. Immediately after their departure, another temporary

place of worship was prepared ; and in 1796 a second church, of a commodious size and structure, capable of containing about 500 persons, was built, in which the regular worship of the Church of England continued to be performed, even after the transfer of the Colony to the Crown. All these occasioned an expense to the Company of several thousand pounds. The church last mentioned may have decayed, or may have been turned to some other use before Mr. Thorpe visited the Colony ; but had the inquiries, which he takes credit to himself for having made, been very minute, he might have learnt that such a structure had once existed, and that it had been transferred to the Crown.

With respect to the grave and important remark, respecting the “ steeple ” and the “ bell,” notwithstanding the additional weight and authority which it derives from Mr. Thorpe’s public and private character, the Directors think it wholly unnecessary to say more than that they suppose the Sierra Leone Company consulted their finances as to the style of their buildings, and that proper and sufficient means were provided to announce the hour of Divine Worship.

The reason which Mr. Thorpe pretends to assign for the removal of the Rev. Mr. Nylander from the chaplaincy of the Colony is also very incorrectly stated. Here indeed the Directors can speak on the authority of Mr. Nylander himself, who has explained very fully his reasons for this step, in a letter to his employers, the Church Missionary Society, dated in December 1811, which has been laid before

the Board. These are, first, That his health required the removal; secondly, That he was desirous of prosecuting his original purpose in coming to Africa, namely, a mission to the natives; but, thirdly and lastly, Because some Europeans of influence in the Colony, and there is reason to believe that Mr. Thorpe himself was principally referred to, were offended with his plain preaching to the poor Colonists, called it methodistical, and insisted on his preaching Blair's sermons instead of his own, which he conceived destroyed his usefulness, and rendered his longer stay inexpedient. Now whether Mr. Nylander judged rightly or not in this particular, even in common justice to the worthy man, Mr. Thorpe ought to have taken more pains than he seems to have used, to inform himself of the motives which led Mr. Nylander to exchange a house, and respectable station, and 550*l.* a year, in the Colony, for the laborious, and, in a pecuniary view, unprofitable, situation of a Missionary to the Bulloms.

9. A further charge against the Sierra Leone Company, is thus expressed: " Their books and agents were removed, while many of the poor settlers who had toiled for them for years were left unpaid. The case of some of these old, impoverish- ed, and destitute people, I represented before the Chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, in a Committee of the African Institution, but no redress was offered. I simply requested that all their demands might be referred to arbitration in the Colony, and even this was not complied with."

The accusation is afterwards more specifically renewed :—" Poor Kizil, the old black settler, who sent his bill for work and labour done long since for the Sierra Leone Company, requested of the worthy Mr. William Allen, to purchase a mill from the money he had so justly earned, and send it out; but neither the Chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, nor the Committee of the African Institution, would attend to the poor old man's demand; he was not paid, nor any arbitration allowed; consequently no mill could be purchased."

This charge was preferred in January 1814, before a Committee of the African Institution, who went very fully into an examination of its truth, and found it to be groundless. The examination has again been renewed by the Directors since the publication of Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet, and with a similar result. With respect to Kizell, the only person specified by Mr. Thorpe, and whose case he so feelingly laments, there has been laid before the Board a regular account-current between him and the commercial agent of the Sierra Leone Company from the year 1802 to the year 1809, signed by Kizell himself, by which a debt appears due from him, to the Sierra Leone Company, of 199\$ dollars and 90 cents. To this account is annexed a paper of exceptions on the part of Kizell, also signed by himself, which, if they were all allowed, would still leave a balance against him of about 1450 dollars. As a security for this *admitted* debt Kizell assigned to the Sierra Leone Company his house in Freetown, by the following



memorandum of assignment, dated on the 19th of June, 1810, more than a year after his account-current had been closed, and when he must have had a full opportunity of ascertaining its correctness.

“ Know all men by these presents, that I John Kizell, of the Colony of Sierra Leone, trader, do make over to the Honourable the Sierra Leone Company, and their assigns, all my right and title to that lot of land numbered two hundred and seventy-eight in the Register and Plan of Town Lots for Freetown, in the Colony aforesaid, with all buildings, out-houses, &c. in the said Lot, to be held by them, the said Company, for their use, until such time as the debt due by me to the said Company be all paid, and no longer.

“ In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this nineteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ten.

(Signed) JOHN KIZELL, L. S.

“ Sealed and delivered in presence of

(Signed) JAMES BECKET,

(Signed) STEPHEN GABBEDON.”

As the Company had then ceased to have any establishment at Sierra Leone, it is scarcely possible that they could have contracted any new debt to Kizell, or to any other person in Africa.

In the face of such a document, it seemed necessary that some probable evidence of the alleged claim should be produced, before even the most deli-

cate idea of equity could require it to be sent to a reference at Sierra Leone : not the slightest shadow of such evidence has hitherto been produced.

Mr. Hamilton, the gentleman mentioned with so much honour by Mr. Thorpe at page 68 of his pamphlet, was the Company's Accountant, and, subsequently to the month of April 1810, their sole agent at Sierra Leone. The assignment of Kizell's house is in Mr. Hamilton's hand-writing. He remained in the Colony for two years beyond the date of that assignment, namely, until the month of June 1812, nearly a year after Mr. Thorpe had arrived in the Colony ; but during the whole of that time he had not been applied to on the part of Kizell for any further settlement of his account. In short, never was any charge more completely falsified than this.

It may be proper to add, that Kizell's assignment of his house had not been put in force by the Company or their agents. Perhaps to their lenity it may be owing that they have been subjected to this extraordinary and groundless imputation of refusing to pay the just demands of a settler who toiled for them.—The Board is but too sensible how tedious this detail must appear, yet it seems necessary in order to render the refutation of Mr. Thorpe's charges complete. This article may serve to illustrate the general complexion of Mr. Thorpe's attack, and the nature of the only difficulty there is in repelling it.

But although Mr. Thorpe specifies only the case of Kizell, he says there were *many* of the settlers who were placed, by the fraudulent conduct of the Com-

pany and their agents, in circumstances equally deplorable. When pressed by the Committee which sat in December 1813, to state the names of the settlers to whom he alluded; in addition to Kizell, he mentioned the name of Reid. This man, however, it appeared, had acted as a Commissary; his accounts, which were confused and complicated, through his own inaccuracy, had been for some time in a train of adjustment, and the balance due to him, having been ascertained, was paid to his attorney.

These were the only cases of *settlers* mentioned by Mr. Thorpe. He complained indeed of great injustice having been done to a person of the name of Campbell, an European. But the injustice in this case was chargeable on the Colonial Jury, who tried his suit against the Company, in the year 1809, and found a verdict in the Company's favour. Mr. Thompson being at that time Governor of the Colony, it could not be alleged that the Company or their agents possessed any undue influence over the colonial courts.

The *only* other case mentioned by Mr. Thorpe, and he was urged to mention all he knew, was that of a Mr. Garell, a slave trader, who had left the Governor and Council of Sierra Leone the executors of his last will. Mr. Thorpe alleged that the Company was possessed of property belonging to this man's heirs, which they would not give up;—whereas the truth appeared to be, that the Company had only recently received a remittance of between five and six hundred pounds on this account, which was immediately placed in the funds, in the names of trustees, to

await the claim of those who might be entitled to receive it.

But notwithstanding the result of this previous inquiry, Mr. Thorpe does not scruple to affirm, that "many of the poor settlers who had toiled for them for years, were left unpaid by the Company."

Mr. Vanneck, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Nicol, whom Mr. Thorpe represents, at p. 68, as men of intelligence and respectability, and who had resided about ten years in the Colony, were questioned on this point. *They* had heard of no such case. It had been Mr. Vanneck's province to superintend the labourers: he affirmed, that they had always been honourably and regularly paid once a week.

In short, the Board is fully persuaded, that this very serious charge has not even the slightest colour of probability to support it.

10. Mr. Thorpe goes on to assert, that "the Company demanded to be paid by Government for their buildings, and did accordingly receive a large sum for them, although they had previously received 100,000*l.* for the improvement of the Colony."

This statement is also unfounded. By the tenor of the agreement made with his Majesty's Government, on the occasion of the transfer of the Colony, the Company were allowed to retain their *commercial* buildings, all their other buildings being unconditionally surrendered. Fourteen months subsequent to the transfer, namely in the month of February or March, 1809, the commercial affairs of the Company having been brought to a close, Governor

Thompson proposed to purchase the commercial store-house with its appurtenances, the only buildings they had retained: and he accordingly made the purchase at a price which he himself thought reasonable, viz. 2000*l*.

But if Governor Thompson, who had the Act of Parliament transferring the Colony to Government in his hands, and who by that Act was himself constituted the sole judge of what were *public* buildings within the meaning of the Act, and as such to be unconditionally surrendered to the Crown, had not been fully persuaded, that this particular building was fairly and legally the property of the Company, it may be presumed he would not have purchased and paid for it. Would any one who reads in Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet, that the Sierra Leone Company had demanded to be paid for their buildings, and did accordingly receive a large sum, suppose, that the facts of the case were, that they had surrendered to the Crown, *without being paid for them*, all *public* buildings, indeed, all their buildings of every kind, except only their commercial warehouse and its appurtenances, which were reserved to them by special agreement, and which they afterwards sold for 2000*l*.? Nor should it pass unobserved, that this transaction, so reprobated by Mr. Thorpe, was a voluntary act on the part of that very Governor, whom in another place, and for another purpose, the same Mr. Thorpe represents as a model of integrity and honour.

11. The most serious, however, of all Mr. Thorpe's accusations against the Sierra Leone Company, and

their agents, is that of *slave trading*. But in proportion to its seriousness, it appears to have, if possible, still less foundation whereon to rest than any that has yet been adverted to.

The Directors of the Sierra Leone Company had from the very first professed to be hostile to the slave trade. Some of them were among the most distinguished parliamentary advocates of the Abolition. Mr. Thorpe himself complains (p. 6.) that they "trumpeted their abhorrence" of the slave trade, and "fulminated against every person implicated in it;" and it has been seen, that they required a bond from all who entered into their service not to engage in it. No one, indeed, can read their printed Reports, without feeling, that they were the intelligent, determined, and fearless adversaries of this traffic.

Under these circumstances, there would naturally be an eagerness, on the part of those engaged in the slave trade, to expose any deviation from their professed principles, of which the Sierra Leone Company or their agents might have been guilty. But what was the fact?

In the year 1799, the Chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, Mr. H. Thornton, introduced a Bill into Parliament for prohibiting the British Slave Trade in the River Sierra Leone, and for 500 miles on each side of it. The proprietors of Bance Island, a great slave factory in that very river, and the whole body of slave merchants of London and Liverpool opposed the Bill, which was, nevertheless, carried triumphantly through the House of Commons, and lost in the House of Lords only by four votes.

They petitioned to be heard by counsel at the bar of the House of Lords, and leave was given them. The Sierra Leone Company was also admitted to the bar, and evidence on both sides was examined at great length. On this occasion, the witnesses called by the Sierra Leone Company did not scruple, as may be seen by a reference to their testimony, to represent the slave trade, and slave traders, in their true colours of cruelty, rapacity, treachery, and blood. On the other side, several slave traders were examined who were familiar with the Colony; who had frequently visited it; who had resided in its neighbourhood, and who had ample means of knowing all that passed in the Colony, and that entered or went out of it. It would have been of great importance to their cause—and still more such an occasion of triumphing over an adversary, if not of exposing his hypocrisy, as would have been eagerly as well as justly seized—to have shewn, that the Sierra Leone Company, who had brought in this Bill for limiting their trade in slaves, (expressly on the ground of the insuperable bar which it interposed to innocent commerce, to agriculture, to civilization, to improvement of every kind,) had themselves participated in the guilt of that traffic. No such charge, however, was made; nay, no intimation or suspicion to that effect was urged or insinuated by any of the witnesses. Till that period, therefore, it may be presumed that they were guiltless; at least in the absence of all proof of an affirmative kind, this, in their circumstances, is but an equitable presumption.

Again, in 1803-4, a long examination of evidence, adverse to the Sierra Leone Company, took place in a Committee of the House of Commons. But in the course of that examination, although it was admitted on both sides that many settlers and some even of the Company's servants had quitted the Colony to engage in the slave trade, not the slightest imputation was thrown out against the Company, or their Governor and Council, as if they had been concerned either directly or indirectly in carrying it on, or as if they had favoured it in others: no, not even by those settlers whose lands were forfeited in consequence of their embarking in the slave trade, nor yet by any one of those whom Mr. Thorpe represents as among the Company's *best* servants, and against whom his words seem to admit, that they "fulminated," and "trumpeted their abhorrence," and who did not return to the Colony till after the abolition of the slave trade and the transfer of the government to the Crown.

It would obviously have been of great moment to such persons to have exhibited the Sierra Leone Company, and their Governor and Council, (their public accusers), as having sanctioned, by their own example, all that they were stigmatised for having done. Several of these persons had been for some years, (two of them nearly ten), in situations of trust in the Company's service. Not one of them, however, appears to have ever pretended to justify his own delinquency by alleging any slave-trading transaction against his masters. With the strongest temptation to prefer such an accusation, if it were



true, and with the amplest means of knowing its truth, they have never replied to the charges of the Company by a single attempt at recrimination.

But in the face of all this strong body of presumptive evidence, Mr. Thorpe affirms (p. 5), that the servants of the Company "constantly purchased the natives;" and he adds in a note, that this fact was "given in evidence on oath before Governor Thompson and Chief Justice Thorpe."—The Directors have taken great pains thoroughly to investigate this extraordinary charge. They have considered with care the information which was obtained upon it from Mr. Thorpe himself, in January 1814, by the Committee of Sierra Leone Inquiry, of which Mr. Brougham was chairman; and they are now enabled to state the facts of the case.

In November 1807, an American Slave Captain, of the name of Bradford, attempted, in the river Sierra Leone, about five miles above the Colony, to kidnap eleven natives, who had come on board his vessel to trade. He succeeded in securing five; two were drowned in the scuffle, and four escaped. Dreading the vengeance of the natives, Captain Bradford instantly took refuge in the harbour of Sierra Leone, intending to sail with the next tide. The native chiefs, however, reached the Colony, with the news of this outrage, in time to put it in Governor Ludlam's power to call the ruffian to account. His legal right to interfere was indeed extremely doubtful. He nevertheless ordered the Captain to be seized, and a full examination to be instituted. Had the jurisdiction of the charter of justice extended to the

place where the outrage had been committed, he might possibly have been convicted of murder. But under the peculiar circumstances of the case, all that Governor Ludlam felt that he could properly do was to require the Captain to make satisfaction for the outrage to the utmost demand of African law, or, in case of his refusal, to abandon him and his vessel to the retaliation of the natives. The Captain agreed to the former alternative. The five persons who had been kidnapped were instantly set at liberty. About 200*l.* worth of goods, all that he had remaining on board, were brought on shore, and delivered to the injured natives; besides which, ten of his slaves were taken out of the hold of his vessel, and landed in the Colony.

In satisfying the demands of the natives, the simplest course for Governor Ludlam to pursue would have been to deliver over these ten slaves to the native chiefs, who would have willingly accepted them in satisfaction of their claims.

Nevertheless, as the slave trade had not yet ceased, there was but too much reason to apprehend that these poor creatures would be again sold, (as, according to *African* law, they might lawfully be, *before* domestication), if they were given at once into the hands of the native chiefs. To prevent this, and to secure at the same time still further benefit to the rescued slaves, Mr. Ludlam proposed to bind them as apprentices for fourteen years to any respectable Colonists who would pay to the Native Chiefs their customary value, which, according to their own laws, the Chiefs were compellable to receive, instead of

the persons of the slaves. Of the ten slaves who had been taken from on board, four, on account of peculiar circumstances \*, were unconditionally liberated, with the consent of the Native Chiefs. Governor Ludlam's proposal was accepted, with respect to the remaining six, who were children: and they were accordingly bound as apprentices; two of them to Mr. Alexander Smith, two to Mr. George Nicol, and two to Mr. James Reid. They were thus rescued from the miseries of the Middle Passage, in a vessel the hold of which was not more than three feet and a half in height, and on board of which, though only forty-nine tons burthen, were actually stowed sixty-four slaves.

How stands the case, then, with respect to these individuals? They exchanged slavery through life, for a servitude which scarcely extended beyond their non-age; the cruel bondage of America or the West Indies, for an apprenticeship of the same nature with that to which free children are liable in England. They exchanged a hopeless absence from their country and their friends, for the power of revisiting both: they exchanged the extinction of all civil rights, for the possession of every right which the law of England, in England itself, would give.

Such is the extent of the injury that was done to these poor natives. On the other hand, Governor Ludlam secured to the injured parties, what they conceived a full compensation. He punished in some degree a flagitious offender: he raised the

\* Two of these, from their very diseased state, could not have survived their miseries, had they remained in the vessel,

credit of the Colony for equal justice and prompt redress; and he prevented probably a cruel and bloody retaliation upon the first American, even though unoffending, who should have come within the reach of native vengeance.

One hundred dollars, indeed, were paid to the Native Chiefs, for the redemption of each of these six children, who became the apprentices of the persons paying the money, being bound to them by regular indentures, under the guardianship of the Governor and Council, and under the full protection of British Law. And this transaction—in the strictest sense of the word, a redemption of natives of Africa out of slavery to be made free—is proved by his own examination, in January 1814, to be the same which Mr. Thorpe would stigmatise as the slave trade! The Directors cannot dismiss this case, without calling upon the meeting to consider the fair inferences to be drawn from such facts being made the ground of such an accusation.

But, according to Mr. Thorpe, the servants of the Company not only “constantly purchased the natives, but they worked them themselves without pay, and hired them to others for pay.”—This, when fully examined, proves to be no more than this; that they redeemed natives of Africa from slavery, who were bound to them as apprentices for a limited time.—But to what extent was this done?

The Directors have had an opportunity of examining an authentic copy of the register of apprentices, in the Colony of Sierra Leone, on the 1st of January 1808, the day on which the Colony was transferred

to the Crown. The whole number on that day was thirty-eight. Of these, however, twenty-seven were the children of settlers, bound either by their parents or guardians, for periods varying from two to twelve years, but chiefly from three to seven years. The remaining eleven only were natives, whose indentures were precisely of the same tenor with those of the children of the settlers. Of these eleven, six were the poor creatures who were rescued, as has been already related, from the hold of an American slave ship. Of the remaining five, two were bound for four years, one for six years, one for seven, and one, a young girl, for thirteen years.

And this is the state of things, which Mr. Thorpe has chosen to represent as a monstrous system of oppression. "*Their servants constantly purchased the natives, worked them themselves without pay, and hired them to others for pay!!*"

12. But the evil, according to Mr. Thorpe, did not stop here. The servants of the Company "suffered slaves to be brought in and taken out of the Colony, and allowed them to be seized and delivered to their masters when they sought protection."—The Directors have received the most satisfactory proof, that the Sierra Leone Company and their servants proceeded uniformly on a directly opposite system; and that they experienced much trouble and inconvenience, and even encountered dangers of a very formidable kind, from their practical adherence to the principle of affording their protection to fugitives, who sought it. In point of fact, it appears,

that all slaves who sought shelter in the Colony were protected, to the utmost power of the Governor and Council; nor has one instance been discovered of protection having been refused to a slave who claimed it.

It would be too much to expect, that in a Colony which touched, on all sides, on limits where the slave trade was authorized and protected, both by British and African law, no persons had entered the Colony, and quitted it again, who had been slaves in their own country before they entered it, and who continued to be so after they had quitted it. Persons were not interrogated, when they entered the Colony, or when they left it voluntarily, as to whether they were bond or free. It is enough, that the Government of the Colony was always prompt to guard from lawless violence, those who sought its protection. They could not have *invited* the resort of fugitives to the Colony, without giving their neighbours what would have seemed just cause of war against them.

Neither is it meant to be asserted, that no persons have ever been forcibly seized within the limits of the Company's jurisdiction, and delivered to their masters, and even carried to slave factories and sold. Instances of this kind have been suspected by the Governor and Council, where proof of the fact could not be obtained. But it clearly appears, that no such instances were permitted. On the contrary, several were discovered, tried, and severely punished.

The injustice of the whole of this charge has been fully demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Directors.

13. The Company is next accused of having permitted their store-keeper "to supply the slave factories and slave ships, and to feed the trade in every possible way."—Mr. Thorpe cannot be ignorant that the Colony of Sierra Leone was originally situated in the midst of slave traders; that, with the exception of its own narrow limits, there was not a spot in western Africa, during the entire period of the Company's connection with it, where that trade was not carried on, nor a single European or African trader, or even an African Chief, who was not engaged in it; and that, therefore, it was absolutely impossible to have a single commercial transaction of any kind which might not contribute, in some way more or less direct, to feed the slave trade. If a Native Chief brought a ton of camwood, or of rice, to the Colony, the goods which he purchased, with the proceeds of its sale, might be employed, and doubtless, in many cases, were employed, in slave-trading transactions; nor is it very obvious, how even Mr. Thorpe's enlightened vigilance could have prevented this.

Mr. Thorpe saw Sierra Leone some years after the slave trade had been proscribed in that river and its vicinity; and when there was comparatively little difficulty in avoiding an intercourse with slave traders, who, indeed, were then obliged to hide themselves from justice. But, during the whole period of the Company's administration, the slave trade was *legal* even to British subjects; who retained a right, under the Act of Parliament, to come into the very harbour of Sierra Leone, for wood, water, and refreshment.

But this, instead of being any advantage, was felt by the Company as one of the main difficulties with which they had to contend ; a difficulty so great as to induce them to make that attempt in Parliament, in 1799, which has been already mentioned, to procure a prohibition of the slave trade in the river Sierra Leone, and its vicinity, and of which any one would have supposed it impossible that Mr. Thorpe could have been ignorant, if he had not chosen to designate this intercourse, which was necessary to the very existence of the Colony, and of which the effects were unavoidable, as “ a feeding of the slave trade.”

14. But a heavier charge, if possible, still remains : “ Even in Mr. Ludlam’s last administration of the government,” Mr. Thorpe states (p. 5), “ two cargoes of Slaves, taken from the Americans, were publicly sold at twenty dollars a head.”

The occurrence to which Mr. Thorpe here refers took place, (and it is difficult to suppose that he could be ignorant of this,) after the Sierra Leone Company had ceased to govern the Colony. But besides this general exception against grounding on the transaction an accusation of the Sierra Leone Company, Mr. Thorpe has, as usual, grossly misrepresented the facts of the case, and altogether mistated its general nature and character.

Certain Negroes, in number 167, taken by his Majesty’s ship *Derwent*, Captain Parker, in two American vessels, trading for slaves contrary to the laws of the United States, were brought to Sierra Leone in



March or April 1808. No Vice-Admiralty Court had yet been instituted, nor had the Orders in Council respecting captured Negroes reached the Colony. But these Slaves having been brought to Freetown by Captain Parker, it became necessary for Governor Ludlam to provide for them, even though they had not yet been "*condemned to his Majesty's use.*" The case was perfectly novel. Governor Ludlam had no precedent, nor any analogy to guide him, in the course he should pursue, excepting the provisions of the Abolition Act of 1807; and he therefore, humanely and pardonably at least, determined on proceeding according to the spirit of that Act, which enacts that Slaves taken under it, and condemned to his Majesty, shall either be enlisted into his Majesty's sea and land forces, or bound apprentices for a term of years; and that certain bounties on such Slaves shall be payable to the captors, according as the case may be. Adhering to the spirit of this enactment, Governor Ludlam took forty of the ablest men into the service of Government, providing them with proper food and clothing, and promising them their full liberty at the end of three years. The remainder, consisting of eighteen men, fourteen women, and ninety-five children, he proposed to place as apprentices among the Colonists of Sierra Leone, for periods varying according to the age of the parties;—persons of eighteen years old and upwards being bound only for three years, and those who were less than eighteen being bound for a proportionably longer time. Public notice of his

purpose having been given, 355 applications were immediately made. Many of these applicants Mr. Ludlam knew to be utterly unfit, from their poverty or their profligacy, to have natives entrusted to them as apprentices; but he conceived that almost all, if not all, those who were most objectionable would be cut off at once by a measure which would appear impartial, and could therefore give no offence. He required that every one whom he permitted to receive any of these natives as apprentices should pay twenty dollars for each; and he resolved that this sum should be given to the captors, in lieu of the bounty of forty pounds for each man, thirty pounds for each woman, and ten pounds for each child, which they would have received from Government, had there been a Court of Vice-Admiralty in the Colony, in which the captives could have been prosecuted to condemnation.

He deemed it reasonable in itself, and strictly conformable with the principles of the Abolition Act, which allowed a bounty to all captors of Slaves regularly condemned, that the captors in this case should derive some benefit from the seizure they had made; and as the Slaves had not been regularly condemned in any Court of Vice-Admiralty, the captors, he conceived, could have no claim to the remuneration held out by the Act.

In requiring this payment, however, Mr. Ludlam's *main* object appears to have been not to reward the captors; that was merely incidental; but to select the masters. In this point of view, the plan perfectly succeeded: more than two hundred applications were immediately withdrawn; and Governor Ludlam then

placed the captured Negroes among those who remained, and who were the most respectable of the Colonists, telling them distinctly, that as soon as indentures could be prepared, the natives would be bound to them in the usual form, under the guardianship of the Governor and Council. The nature of apprenticeships was well understood by the Settlers. Many of their own children were apprentices : and as to possessing any other right over those natives, than that which sprung from the known relation of master and apprentice, no idea of the kind appears for a moment to have been entertained ; and if it had, the operation of the laws relative to apprentices, which were the laws of England, would doubtless have corrected it.

Governor Ludlam, in writing on this subject, makes the following observations ; and as he is now no more, and the charge is one which affects his memory, it is fair he should be heard.

“ I thought the most impartial and effectual mode of proceeding would be to require a payment of twenty dollars for each apprentice. This plan excluded at once a great number of young people who, on that single account, were unfit to be entrusted with the care of a native child, and a great number of characters in more advanced years who would hope to support themselves by the labour of the native, though he at the same time would be poorly clothed and poorly fed. I am not even yet aware of any objection to the plan which counterbalanced its advantages ; nor can I conceive in what way, whether it be advantageous or not, it can be construed into

a sale of Slaves. It was the act of a public and authorised body (the Governor and Council of Sierra Leone, acting in the name and by authority of his Majesty), not for the private benefit of the individuals of that body, but for public purposes. The purpose to which the money was applied by the Governor and Council, was the rewarding of the exertions of the captors; a principle which seemed to me sanctioned by the Abolition Act. However, as this mode of application has been disapproved, I will not contend for its expediency. I will only state, that this point is totally distinct from the question; whether Slaves were sold. I do not urge all this as meaning to contend that Slaves were never allowed to be purchased, or, as I must call it, *redeemed*, in this Colony. But I contend that *these* were neither purchased nor redeemed. The proceeding in its principle appeared to me similar to the plan adopted at home for preventing the introduction of improper persons into practice as attorneys, &c. An Act passed about 1793, laying a tax of 100*l.* on every clerk who should thenceforward be articulated; the ability to pay this sum being reckoned the most unobjectionable rule by which to regulate the exclusion of improper characters. Precisely the same was my motive here; for I cannot perceive that the principle is altered by its being the object to select the master in the one case and the apprentice in the other."

The preceding statements, which have been given more in detail on account of the importance of the subject, and in justice to an able and excellent, though

somewhat speculative man, now no more, the late Governor Ludlam, will shew what was the real nature of this transaction, to which, unquestionably, there are solid objections on the score of irregularity and inexpediency ; although it is a gross and palpable misrepresentation to call it a sale of Slaves.

This affair took place in March or April, 1808. The intelligence reached England about the end of the following July. On the 3d of August, Mr. Macaulay, in a private letter to Governor Ludlam; thus expressed himself:—" The 20 dollars ought not to have been given to the captors. It ought to have formed a fund for the benefit of the Negroes themselves. It tells ill, because it looks something like a sale."

It is impossible to state the real merits of this case more fairly and impartially than it is stated by the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, in a letter to Governor Thompson, dated 20th October, 1808, an extract from which will be found annexed \*.

Mr. Thorpe would insinuate (p. 16), that this transaction had been "concealed" by the Sierra Leone Company and the African Institution. The truth; on the contrary, is, that when intelligence of it was first received, which was in July 1808, steps were immediately taken by the African Institution to protect the Slaves that had been landed at Sierra Leone from any claims which their American owners might prefer against them. The circumstances of the case were, with that view, fully stated to Sir John Nicholl,

\* See Appendix, C.

then the King's Advocate, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Lawrence, and Mr. Stephen; who met in consultation upon it, and advised that, if the American owners should bring the matter before the Court of Admiralty, the Negroes themselves should appear as parties, either by themselves or their attorney, before the Court, in order to implead their right to freedom; and that application should also be made to the American Government on the subject. Both these steps were taken. A power of attorney was obtained from all the liberated Slaves, to be used in case of need; and an application was made on the subject to the American Government, in which the facts of the case, even that of the apprenticing of the Slaves, were distinctly stated. This application was favourably received. Indeed, the reply of the American Government, accompanied by the opinion of their own Attorney-General, was of the most satisfactory kind, and having been submitted to the prize appeal court, during the pleadings in the well-known case of the *Amedie*, was made one ground of the momentous decision which was pronounced by the Court on that occasion. By this decision the subjects of any state which does not sanction the slave trade by its municipal laws, are incapacitated from prosecuting in a British Court, a claim for the restoration of property embarked in such illegal trade\*.

The proceedings which were instituted in the

\* See, for a full report of this judgment, the Fifth Report of the African Institution, p. 11,

Vice-Admiralty Court at Sierra Leone respecting these one hundred and sixty-seven captives, with the view of establishing the strange allegation of their having been *sold* by Mr. Ludlam as slaves, and to which proceedings Mr. Thorpe refers, as his proof, appear to have been, indeed, most extraordinary. Mr. Thompson, the then Governor, was also at once *Prosecutor, Judge, and Counsel*. A number of witnesses were subjected to examinations, and cross examinations, all conducted by himself; and to this body of what is called evidence, were subjoined several letters of Mr. H. Thornton and Mr. Macaulay, (some brief extracts of which appear in Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet) as proving that these one hundred and sixty-seven natives of Africa were sold, dealt with, and treated as *slaves* by the Sierra Leone Company and their agents. The whole forms a singular mass of heterogeneous materials, and manifests an entire disregard of the plainest rules of evidence, law, and equity.

Having alluded to the attempt which Mr. Thorpe has made, by some brief extracts from letters of Mr. H. Thornton and Mr. Macaulay, to stigmatize these gentlemen as favouring a trade in Slaves, it is hardly necessary to say, that the attempt has wholly failed. The Directors, however, are saved the trouble of entering on this part of Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet, by a Letter which Mr. Macaulay himself has published, addressed to the Royal President of this Institution, and which cannot be read without a full conviction of the false and calumnious nature of the imputation, and of the utter contempt of all the received rules of fair and

honourable dealing, by which alone any colour of probability could, even for a moment, have been given to it.

15. The Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, Mr. Thorpe states, on the surrender of the Colony to Government, "formed (*to uphold their old influence*) a Society called the African Institution."—It will not be very easy for Mr. Thorpe to persuade the public, that the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, whose names have been already mentioned, could have any *selfish* end in contributing to form the African Institution. But in truth, the only Directors of that Company whose names are to be found in the list of the Directors of the African Institution, besides those of the ever-to-be-lamented Mr. Henry Thornton and Mr. Granville Sharp, are, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Charles Grant, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Babington, Mr. T. F. Forster, and Mr. Clarkson; names too well known, and too deservedly dear to the friends of Africa, to have been excluded from the management of any institution which had the good of Africa for its object. But these persons formed only a small proportion of the managing body, which consists of a President, twenty-two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and thirty-six Directors. There was not, therefore, between the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company and of the African Institution, the identity which Mr. Thorpe affirms to have existed. And with respect to the absurd imputation against the Directors of both Institutions, of "securing the trade of the Colony to their managing



Secretary ;" by what means was it in the power of either the one or the other to do this, even if they had entertained any such design? Did they convey to their Secretary any facilities beyond what his own knowledge of the trade of Africa and of the Colony gave him? Does it appear that a single reference was ever made to either body on the subject, or a single question asked or agitated, or a single resolution promulged or adopted by them; in short, that they ever interfered, either directly or indirectly, in the matter? The most distinct and unqualified negative is now given to these questions.

Before the subject of the Sierra Leone Company is closed, the Board is desirous of expressing, in the strongest terms, its deep impression of the laudable and disinterested views which first led to the formation of that Company, and by which its conductors appear to have been uniformly actuated. And although this vindication of their conduct may appear in some degree foreign to the objects of the African Institution, yet, to rescue from unmerited reproach those who have acted so conspicuous a part in forwarding the great measure of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, is due to the general character of that sacred cause, and is no more than an act of justice towards those who preceded them in their labours.

Of the causes which led to the failure of the Sierra Leone Company, the Board has already spoken at large in its First Report. Those who wish to see them more fully and satisfactorily deve-

loped, may consult the Reports of the Sierra Leone Company generally, but particularly those of 1794 and 1804, the last containing the evidence of the Directors of the Company which was laid before Parliament. They were there stated to be, the want of a sufficient power and authority in the Government of the Colony, during the first eight years of its existence, combined with the unfavourable character of the Settlers ; the insufficiency of its force to check the encroachments, or discourage the aggressions, of the Natives ; the unhealthiness incident to all new settlements in tropical climates, which operated in various ways to keep the Company's establishment in a low and inadequate state : to which were added the too great limitation of the expenditure of the Company, in consequence of the heavy losses they had sustained ; the inexperience of the conductors of the undertaking in the earlier periods of the settlement ; but above all, the long continuance both of the war and the slave trade, by which the expectations reasonably entertained by the founders of the Colony, on its first settlement, were fatally disappointed.

But besides these great obstacles to the success of the Company, it ought to be considered that they were not merely a trading company, but that they were burthened, during the first eight years, with the entire charge of the erection, government, and protection of the Colony ; of its civil, judicial, and military administration ; of its medical care, and public instruction, and public works ; and, during the

remaining eight years, were only partially aided in bearing these burdens by the parent state.

Few places appear to have met with greater discouragements. The Colony was frequently threatened, and twice actually attacked, by the natives: once it was ruined by the French: twice, its own people broke out into insurrection. When extensive commerce was carried on, the French destroyed it. When cultivation flourished, the African chiefs first drew away the native labourers, and then drove the settlers from their farms. Even when exempt from actual violence, the turbulence of the settlers, the want of fortifications, and the policy of the natives, kept the Colony in a state of disquietude and alarm. The heavy losses which the Company sustained obliged it to pursue a rigid economy, which was unfavourable both to internal improvement and external influence, and consequently to the general credit of the settlement. Owing partly to this cause, and partly to the climate, the establishment was often insufficient for the most necessary purposes. Little, therefore, comparatively, could be done to cultivate an intercourse with the neighbouring nations, or to extend the knowledge of the interior. The main hindrance, however, to the Company's success unquestionably arose from the slave trade, which ceased, as has been already observed, to be legal even in the river Sierra Leone, and to British subjects; only on the day on which the Company ceased to administer the affairs of the Colony. "It created a strong and active interest in Africa, which was

opposed to that of the Sierra Leone Company, and was industriously employed in misrepresenting their designs, and exciting jealousy in every quarter. To this cause may be traced much of the ill-will and consequent hostility of the natives, and of the turbulence and insubordination of the colonists. It rendered the European traders, in particular, the natural enemies of the Company. It supplied the chiefs with the means of acquiring British articles, without their being at the trouble of collecting produce, or cultivating the soil. It interested the leading men in the maintenance of those superstitious practices which, while they formed a great obstacle to civilization, were, *on the coast*, the main source from which the slave trade obtained its victims. It gave to the slave factories a great superiority over the Company, even in the traffic in produce, inasmuch as they were able to conduct a trade, both in produce and Slaves, at nearly the same expense at which a trade in Slaves alone could be carried on. It afforded to the slave factor an advantage in respect to the means of recovering debts; as he had only to seize and sell his debtor, or the family or even townsmen of the debtor, in order to secure himself against loss. He could, therefore, generally gain some preference over the Company, even in the produce market, by affording larger credits to the natives. The slave trade also rendered the Africans, especially those who lived near the coast, and within the influence of slave ships and slave factories, drunken, idle, and ferocious; and by the high profits which it presented, it tempted many of the settlers, and even

some of the Company's officers, either to embark in the service of slave factories, or to enter on their own account into that traffic\*." And when, to all those circumstances are added, the losses and interruptions caused by an unintermitted state of maritime warfare; and, the peculiar unfitness of the main body of the people to persevere under the difficulties, and contend against the dangers, of a new settlement; the wonder will be, that the Colony existed, rather than that it did not flourish.

The Board proposes now to consider those parts of Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet which have a more immediate reference to the proceedings of the African Institution.

At pages 8 and 9, Mr. Thorpe states, the general objects of the African Institution, and then proceeds to criticise their Reports.—Here it will be proper to make one preliminary remark. The Directors of the African Institution, relying on the liberality of the public, had calculated on obtaining funds which would enable them to pursue with vigour the various objects they were desirous of promoting. In this respect they have been disappointed. Mr. Thorpe, indeed, represents the Society as rich. But the fact is, that the contributions they have received have proved wholly inadequate to undertakings which would necessarily involve a large permanent expense. Their whole receipts, of every description, from the first formation of the Society, to the 31st Dec. 1814, have amounted to only 9850/;

\* Sierra Leone Company's Report, 1804, p. 18.

and their annual income, exclusive of donations, has not quite reached 400*l*.

Under these circumstances it became necessary to direct their attention, in the first place, to such objects as were at the same time the most urgent and the most compatible with the state of their funds. And the question, as it respects the conduct of the Directors, is not so much what they may have left undone, as whether they have advantageously employed the limited means they possessed. Their first duty obviously was, to watch over the execution of the laws recently enacted for abolishing the slave trade; to endeavour to prevent their infraction; to suggest the means of rendering them more effectual; and to promote the abolition of this trade by Foreign Powers. It was only in the degree in which these objects were accomplished, that a rational hope could be entertained of civilizing Africa. These objects, however, have proved to be of sufficient magnitude and difficulty to engross a large share of the attention of the Directors, and to absorb a considerable portion of the funds entrusted to them. Many of the measures, however, that have been taken with this view being of a preventive kind, are precisely of that description, which, however extensive in their operation and beneficial in their effects, are the least likely to attract the notice of superficial or prejudiced observers. It is only by such persons, that it can ever be doubted whether the expense which is incurred in promoting either the efficacy of our own abolition laws, or the abolition of the slave trade by Foreign Powers, has a direct and most im-

mentous bearing on the civilization of Africa. Had the Institution confined itself to this single point, it would still have been the best benefactor of that oppressed continent. Whether the efforts of the Directors to promote these objects have been well directed, and whether the sums expended with that view have been beneficially employed, they must leave it to the Subscribers to determine. But it will hardly be said by any one who understands this question, and who compares its state in 1815 with what it was in 1807; who reflects on the unqualified condemnation which the slave trade has received from the assembled powers of Europe; on its total abolition by every maritime state, excepting Spain and Portugal; on the liberation of Northern Africa from this desolating scourge, even for the too protracted period of eight years, to which these powers have limited its duration;—who reflects that in Great Britain the slave trader, who, not many years ago, had power and influence sufficient to sway even the decisions of Parliament, is now branded as a felon; and that much has been done in a variety of ways to repress his illicit commerce, and also to lay a foundation for improving the condition of our wretched colonial bondsmen: it will hardly be said by any one who reflects on these changes, and is capable of estimating their value, that they would have been dearly purchased, if the whole sum of 9850*l.* with which the Directors have been entrusted, had been expended in securing them. By looking, however, into their past Reports, it will be seen, that it was only a part of their small funds which was so expended, and that many other objects of great

though subordinate importance, have likewise engaged their attention \*.

But the Directors will proceed to consider Mr. Thorpe's specific charges against the Institution.

1. First, the alleged neglect of education.

The following is the simple statement of facts on this subject :—

A variety of Resolutions, empowering Mr. Ludlam to erect schools of different kinds, reached the Colony, some of them a short time before, and others soon after, he had resigned the Government of it into the hands of Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Ludlam, to whom these resolutions and requests of the Society, on the subject of education, were addressed, and on whose active co-operation the Institution had confidently relied, on resigning his situation, transferred also to his successor every letter and paper, and every article he had received from the Directors. In a letter from Mr. Ludlam to Mr. Macaulay, he states,—“ My business relating to the African Institution I have given over to Governor Thompson, as the only person whose situation enables him to forward their views in this Colony.” Governor Thompson acknowledges this to have been the case, in letters dated the 11th Nov. 1808, and March 6th and 28th, 1809; but the only remark he makes on the whole of the important subject of education, thus committed to his superintendence, is *an intimation that he did not intend to fulfil some resolution of the Board on that subject.*

\* See Appendix, D.



And, in point of fact, it must be confessed that he does not appear to have taken one step to carry into effect the wishes of the Institution in this respect. Even of three African Youths, on whose education as schoolmasters the Institution had bestowed considerable expense, and whose salaries as teachers Government had undertaken to pay, two were employed in other lines of service. But had there even been a sufficiency of schoolmasters in the Colony, it would still have been vain to hope for much good from their labours, without the vigilant controul and encouraging countenance of persons in superior stations.

On the accession of Captain Columbine to the Government, the Directors furnished him with a transcript of all the papers that had been already forwarded to Sierra Leone, with a request that he would carry their wishes into effect. This he promised to do. Having lost the frigate he commanded before he reached the Colony, and having in consequence of that loss returned to England without visiting Sierra Leone, so much time was unavoidably consumed that he did not actually commence his administration until February 1810, more than a year later than the time when it was intended the change should have taken place.

The ill health and death of Mrs. Columbine ; the death of Mr. Ludlam ; the long and severe illness of Captain Columbine himself, which ended in his death also ; all occurring within the space of little more than a year from the time of his arrival in the Colony, sufficiently account for the little progress made in

giving effect, during his government, to the wishes of the Institution on the subject of instruction. It clearly appears, however, that much more was done in promoting that object during the administration of Captain Columbine than in that of his predecessor; and it was in allusion to that particular period, viz. the year 1810, that the Fifth Report stated that there were between two and three hundred children enjoying the benefit of education at Sierra Leone.

As soon as the untoward circumstances that have been mentioned were known, and it was also known that Colonel Maxwell was named successor to Captain Columbine, urgent representations were sent to him on this subject; and he was furnished with all the resolutions that had already been passed upon it, and empowered to institute schools at the Society's expense, not only at Sierra Leone, but at Senegal and Goree.

It is certainly true that these various efforts of the Directors to promote the work of education in Africa have not led to the institution of schools at the Society's expense. Down to the period of Governor Maxwell's accession to the Government, the causes of this failure have been already mentioned.

That gentleman has shewn a strong solicitude to promote the work of instruction; but he has not thought it necessary, although empowered to do so, to employ the funds of the Institution in that work; as the Government were willing to bear the expense of all the schools he has yet had it in his power to institute; and as, besides this, Missionary Societies

have engaged zealously in the work of education in Africa, and have thereby rendered the application of the funds of the Institution to this object less necessary.

Perhaps indeed it must be admitted, that societies of this description are, on the whole, better adapted to pursue the object of education than a Society constituted as is the African Institution.

It requires a more than ordinary degree of zeal and strength of principle to induce persons, duly qualified for the office of teachers of youth, to devote themselves to that work in a climate so unfavourable to health, and in a situation where they must submit to many privations of comfort, with little or no expectation of those pecuniary advantages which tempt the generality of men to encounter such risks, and make such sacrifices. But men possessing the requisite zeal and strength of principle for such a service naturally enlist themselves at once under some one of those societies which conduct religious missions, and under whose wing they may labour in the capacity of Missionaries, preaching to adults as well as educating youth.

The Institution is precluded by its fundamental rules from undertaking religious missions. The difficulty, however, of finding proper persons in this country willing to go out to conduct schools in Africa, who are not disposed to add the character of missionary to that of teacher, is found to be very great. And on this ground the Directors have even doubted whether they ought not to resign the direct

and immediate pursuit of this object to those religious societies by whom it has been already zealously and successfully prosecuted.—This was a difficulty which, though it has proved very formidable, was not distinctly anticipated at first. But it was not the only difficulty. The low state of the Society's funds was a bar to extended efforts of this description. The salary allowed to a male and a female teacher lately sent out, Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland, (incorrectly stated by Mr. Thorpe to have been procured by Mr. William Allen, and placed on the colonial establishment,) amounts to not more than 300*l.* a year; yet this of itself nearly absorbs the whole annual income of a Society pronounced by Mr. Thorpe to be very rich (p. 66.)

Mr. Thorpe observes in a note. (p. 10), that the Second and Third Reports state that the resolutions of the Board on the subject of education had been carried into effect. These Reports did doubtless assume that those resolutions *would* be carried into effect, there being no reason at that time to suppose that the Governor would prove unfriendly to their designs. In a subsequent Report (Sixth, p. 29.) it is distinctly stated that they had not been carried into effect. The weight of Mr. Thorpe's charge (p. 15), and any supposed inconsistency in the different Reports are thus done away. It was not extraordinary that the Directors should express their disappointment not to have had more specific details to produce with respect to African improvement; because they had repeatedly urged on subsequent Gover-

nors their hope and request, that every attention might be paid to this important object. It would not have been their fault if not one school had been set on foot in the Colony ; and even in that case they would have been able most satisfactorily to answer Mr. Thorpe's charge. Their letters and offers of providing for the expense of schools are, of themselves, irrefragable proofs of their having *attempted* civilization. And, indeed, whatever has been effected either by the Government, or by Missionary Societies, on their earnest recommendation, may reasonably be considered as in a great degree owing to their efforts.

Mr. Thorpe vehemently charges the Directors with deluding a liberal nation, because they stated, as he alleges, in their Second Report, made in the month of March 1808, that "a chance will be afforded for restoring some of the captured Negroes to their connections ; and some, having enjoyed the advantage of instruction in agriculture, and other useful arts in the Colony, may possibly be beneficially employed in disseminating in other parts of Africa the knowledge which they have thus acquired." (p. 11.)

"These poor creatures," he adds, "never received any instruction ; nor was an effort ever made to restore them to their connections and country."

But Mr. Thorpe has not quoted the Report fairly. The following is the whole of the passage from which he has carved this extract :—

"His Majesty's Government has further resolved

to appoint a Court of Vice-Admiralty at Sierra Leone, for the purpose of giving more complete effect to the Act for abolishing the Slave Trade.

“The appointment of such a judicature is particularly desirable at the present moment, as otherwise all the vessels which may be seized under the Abolition Act must be carried to the West Indies for adjudication; a course which would be attended with a cruel protraction of the confinement on ship-board of the captured Slaves. At Sierra Leone, it will also be much easier than it would be in the West Indies, to dispose of these persons agreeably to the humane provisions of the Act of Parliament.

“The system of free labour being already established at Sierra Leone, the introduction of any number of Negroes into that Colony, whether on the footing of free labourers or as apprentices for a limited period, could be attended with none of those inconveniences which, it is alleged, would flow from it in our West-India Islands, and which, as the Committee understand, are deemed to be so considerable as to make it a question whether many of the persons already liberated in the West Indies, under the operation of the Abolition Act, shall not be sent back to Sierra Leone. A *better* chance will also be thus afforded for restoring some of the captured Slaves to their former connections; and some *of them after* having enjoyed the advantage of instruction in agriculture, and in other useful arts at the Colony, may possibly be beneficially employed in disseminating in other parts of Africa, the knowledge which they *may* have thus acquired.

“The Subscribers will readily perceive, that a very wide field is here opened for their benevolent exertions; nor can the Committee contemplate it without an ardent desire that *the funds of the Institution may be so enlarged as to enable them to embrace the opportunity which will in that case be afforded them of conferring a signal benefit on Africa.*”

Was there then any thing so very unteasonable or delusive in this anticipation? The Directors of the African Institution have deeply regretted that it should not have been more effectually realized. Why it has not has already been in part explained. Much more, however, has been done, even in the way of education, than Mr. Thorpe seems willing to allow. And with respect to the return of the captured Slaves to their own country, the Board has only to refer to an official report made to the Secretary of State by Governor Columbine and Mr. Dawes, in 1810, in which is the following passage:—

“Some of these vessels (the captured slave ships) had not yet received their Slaves on board; but their capture had, nevertheless, deprived the slave dealers of the means of carrying off about 2800 Africans; and out of other captures, 471 men, 196 women, and 421 children have been released from slavery.

“A considerable number of the nearest and dearest kindred, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, who had been kidnapped or stolen at various times, and put on board different vessels, have thus been unexpectedly restored to each other at Sierra Leone: and whenever any of them have desired to return to their own country, and such

return has been deemed practicable, they have been allowed to do so ; being first provided with a paper, under the hand and seal of the Governor, certifying that they are to be considered as his people and under his protection, which is looked upon, according to the customs and law of Africa, to be a sufficient security against further molestation.

“ All the people thus returning home must naturally be more than ever the enemies of slavery, as they cannot fail in the last four eventful months of suffering and liberation to have acquired some new ideas of freedom, which will of course be gradually diffused amongst their friends ; and seeing that all white men are not their enemies, but that one European nation considers the slave trade as unlawful, and is determined, if possible, to put an end to it, the natives may by degrees feel some encouragement to liberate themselves from this horrible thralldom.”

The British Government, Mr. Thorpe adds, “ paid two black boys, who wrote badly and read worse, for teaching the children to read and write.” The truth and spirit of this allegation will be seen by the annexed specimens of the handwriting of these youths, who had been educated first by the Sierra Leone Company, and afterwards by the Institution, and who were sent out to Sierra Leone at its expense, though afterwards salaried by Government.—Some further observations on the subject of education are reserved for a subsequent part of the Report.

2. Mr. Thorpe proceeds, at p. 10, to blame the Institution for having sent cotton seeds and various ma-



chines to the Colony before they could be of any use.—The best answer which can be made to the charge contained in this passage, is to be found in the Second and Third Reports of the Society, which are already before the public.—These articles were sent out to Governor Ludlam; but they were received, not by him, but by Governor Thompson, who stated in a letter, dated March 6, 1809, that “measures had been taken for exciting the attention of the Coast to the cotton seeds sent out by the Institution; and a portion of them,” he adds, “will be propagated in the Colony at the proper season.”

Governor Thompson was on the spot at the time, and must have known the actual state of things in the Colony better than the Secretary, or even than Mr. Thorpe. Yet he does not state that there was any objection to the transmission of this cotton seed. On the contrary, his letters clearly imply that it was both a valuable and a seasonable gift. *He* does not say, with Mr. Thorpe, that land had not been granted to the Settlers: nor does he say that they had no implements wherewith to prepare the land. But this, it may be presumed, he would have said, had the fact been so.

In a subsequent letter, dated March 28, 1809, Governor Thompson again mentions his intention of sowing the cotton seed in the Colony; and as a testimony of his approbation of the objects and proceedings of the Institution, he incloses a contribution to its funds of 100*l*. Shortly, however, after this letter was written, he received the intelligence of his recal. His intended removal was postponed for

nearly a year, by the loss of the ship which carried out his successor. During that year it was that the evils mentioned by Mr. Thorpe took place: "The cotton seed was thrown into the river, and the machines suffered to decay."

Mr. Thorpe speaks uniformly in the highest terms of Mr. Thompson. He cannot, therefore, object to his testimony. It seems clear, however, that until the period of his hearing of his recal, at least until the 28th of March 1809, Mr. Thompson did not think that the African Institution had acted either unwisely or improvidently. He had then been Governor of the Colony for eight months, and must have known its circumstances. He had a full knowledge also of what Mr. Thorpe has chosen to represent as profuse and improvident expenditure on the part of the Institution. And yet, in his letter of the 28th of March 1809, he transmits the strongest mark he could give of his approbation of its proceedings, namely, a large contribution to its funds.

If Mr. Thorpe's statement respecting the want of land and implements had not been already proved to be absolutely groundless, it might be plainly inferred, even from the letters of Governor Thompson himself. These letters contain requests respecting a variety of objects wanted in the Colony. He requests, among other things, (particularly arms and ammunition, and animals of different descriptions, as dogs, rabbits, &c.)—

"Hemp seed, enough to sow thirty acres.

"Tobacco seed, twenty-five pounds.

"White Mulberry, one hundred plants.

“ Red American Mulberry, one hundred plants.

“ As many hundred cuttings as possible of the Madeira vine.

“ Ten pounds of red, and ten pounds of white clover and other grasses.”

And he expresses his sincere belief “ that commerce and agriculture will overspread this almost depopulated part of Africa, and that in no very long time the Colony will repay the *benefits received*.”

It was subsequently to this, that hearing of his recal, his views probably took another direction. His efforts to propagate the cotton seed appear to have been suspended. “ The seed was thrown into the river, and the machines suffered to decay.”

Mr. Thorpe has so frequently asserted the want of implements of husbandry, as an impediment to cultivation, that it may be proper to advert to that point more fully. He affirms (p. 35), that the cotton seed was as useless to the natives as to the settlers; for “ they had *no implements of husbandry*, nor *any sort of instrument* to prepare the ground for the seed.”

It has been already shewn, that in the Colony of Sierra Leone, there was no want of the implements of husbandry. That such a want should have existed, and not be complained of, was not possible. That it should be known to exist, and not be supplied by the merchants of the Colony, is very improbable. And it is at least equally improbable, that it should not once have been adverted to by Governor Thompson, or any succeeding Governor, or even by Mr. Thorpe himself while on the spot, in any of his

communications either with the Secretary of State or with the Governor of the Colony.

But it is not merely the colonists, but the natives, who, according to Mr. Thorpe, had no implements wherewith to plant this cotton seed.

Is it possible that Mr. Thorpe, after residing *twenty-one months* in Africa, should not know that the people of Africa are fed with rice, and a great part of them clothed with cotton cloth, the produce of their own labour; and that they both raise the cotton and weave it into cloth? Is it possible also he should not know that the implements required for planting cotton are precisely the same with those required for planting rice; and that as neither the one nor the other could be cultivated without implements, these must have existed although they escaped his observation? The object of the African Institution, therefore, was not to supply implements, which were not wanted, but merely to substitute a better kind of cotton for the wretched sort at present grown in Africa, and also to induce the natives to cultivate that better article more extensively. In order to this they transmitted seed of the best kinds to Sierra Leone, with an earnest request that it might be widely distributed; and they prepared and sent out directions for its management.

It is, moreover, well known to every person of common observation, who has been among the natives of Africa, that they do not in general use European implements in the culture of the soil. They prefer those which they themselves make from bar-iron; and

of this article, large quantities are usually sent to Africa in every merchant ship that sails thither.

The only implement which was really wanted, with a view to the culture of cotton, was a gin for cleaning it. The Africans clean it by the hand. Seven gins as models were accordingly sent; nor was this measure either profuse, improvident, or premature. The gins might have been used at once for cleaning the cotton already growing in Africa. And even with a view to the seed sent out by the Board, as cotton attains its maturity in six months after it is planted, supposing only Mr. Thompson's promises on this subject, as contained in his letter to the Institution, to have been realized, these gins would have been required very soon after their arrival. If the cotton seed had been planted, instead of being thrown into the river, and any considerable quantity of it, as might fairly have been expected, had come to maturity, and there had been no proper gins provided for cleaning it; how much more reasonably might Mr. Thorpe, in that case, have complained of the Institution for neglecting to furnish the necessary means of preparing it for the European market?

3. "In the Third Report," observes Mr. Thorpe, "the same old delusion, as practised by the Sierra Leone Company, is kept up. The Report proceeds to state: 'that the Colony would produce hemp, rope, cotton, silk, sugar, tea, bark, camphire, castor oil, tobacco, &c. &c. &c.' I was in the Colony years after this Report was published, yet never saw any of

those valuable productions; nor heard of any attempt being made to cultivate any of them, except in the instance of one little cotton plantation."

The measures taken with respect to cotton, and the causes of their failure, have been already stated.

With respect to the statement of the Board concerning hemp, tobacco, mulberry plants for feeding the silk-worms, &c. it is difficult to discover what blame could be attributed to the Institution by any other person than Mr. Thorpe. In three or four successive pages, the Third Report gives information, received from different persons, as to the *possibility* of raising certain valuable articles of produce at Sierra Leone, and relates the steps which had been taken to forward their cultivation. Almost any other man would have thought this laudable, and in the way of their duty. But Mr. Thorpe (using his own words, though unfairly marked as quotation, not theirs,) represents them as affirming, *for the sake of imposition*, that the Colony *would* produce these various matters, and then censures the statement as false, because he neither saw the productions nor heard of any attempt to cultivate them. But what does Governor Thompson say on this point? In a letter, dated Nov. 11, 1808, he states, "An excellent report has been made of the progress of leather now tanning with the mangrove bark, of which a specimen shall be sent to the Directors as soon as it is completed." And in a letter dated the 28th March, 1809, he informs the Directors, that "the plants of the Institution were all in good health and prosperity."

Hearing soon afterwards of his recal, he made no further communications to the Board.

But it is not only Mr. Thompson who assures the Institution of the flourishing state of the plants. The following is a letter from Mr. Vanneck, who is stated by Mr. Thorpe (p. 68) to be one of the most intelligent and respectable gentlemen ever sent to the Colony, dated 6th March, 1809:—

“I take the liberty of informing you, that the plants sent out by the Minerva were exceedingly well packed in moss. Only one thing is necessary to observe, should any more be sent out, to have the labels tied to the plants with a little wire. String rots, and it is impossible by unpacking them to distinguish the difference of the plants. They were planted a few days after their arrival, in a moist soil. It pleased the Governor to leave them to my charge. They grew exceedingly well, particularly the mulberries and grape vines. I am afraid the green tea, star-apple, and sour sop are dead. I am ordered to transport them to the top of Leicester Mountain, which place is cleared for the purpose.”

If then it be true, that Mr. Thorpe, during his short stay in the Colony, never saw any of these productions, it may perhaps be owing to the same cause which led to the throwing of the cotton seed into the river, and to the decay of the machines.

4. Mr. Thorpe attacks the Fourth Report of the Institution on no specific ground, except that of deceiving the Navy. And yet the Directors, in order

to obviate the possibility of such deception, inserted in that Report a full abstract of the Abolition Acts, and of the Orders in Council founded on them.

5. If the information given of Sierra Leone in the Fourth Report be fallacious, as is implied in the observations of Mr. Thorpe, then the Directors must themselves have been deceived by Governor Thompson; for all that is there said on the subject is taken from the letters of that gentleman.

6. Mr. Thorpe attacks the Fifth Report, as proving the ignorance of the Directors respecting the Portuguese possessions, north of the Equator (p. 12). All that the Directors said on the subject was, that the Portuguese have no possessions "north of the Equator, with the exception only of the small island of Bessao," (Fifth Report, p. 30.) What there is incorrect in this statement is not very obvious.

7. Mr. Thorpe next attacks the Commission of African Inquiry, mentioned in the Fifth Report.

"In the plenitude of patronage, two of the Company's old servants, Messrs. Ludlam and Dawes, were appointed, with Captain Columbine, Commissioners for surveying the west coast of Africa, within certain latitudes, having a salary of 1500*l.* a year each. The first was known to have possessed neither practice nor theory for the discharge of such a duty; and if the other had a little knowledge of land-surveying, yet he was perfectly inadequate to such an undertaking as surveying the coast. But



Captain Columbine was first depended on for knowledge, and then incapacitated for the undertaking, by being appointed Governor of Sierra Leone. Messrs. Ludlam and Dawes proceeded a little way down the coast: the former died, and the latter returned to Sierra Leone, where Captain Columbine sat on a hill with a theodolite two or three times, gleaned some assistance from the indefatigable Captain Bones, made out what they called a Report; and thus to gratify the select with this piece of patronage, England has uselessly paid above ten thousand pounds." p. 13.

Now here Mr. Thorpe commits two errors. He supposes, or insinuates, that the object of the Commission was a nautical survey of the coast of Africa, which it was not;—and he asserts, that the persons selected were not competent to the duty imposed on them; which they were most fully, and would have been so, even if their duty had been what he represents it. Both Captain Columbine and Mr. Dawes were distinguished by their proficiency in the sciences connected with nautical surveying. The latter gentleman had been particularly recommended on that ground by Dr. Maskelyne, the Astronomer Royal, to the situation of Mathematical Teacher of Christ's Hospital; and in earlier life, when he went to New South Wales, he received from the Board of Longitude a set of instruments to enable him to prosecute nautical and astronomical observations for the general benefit of science. Even in that point of view, therefore, the selection was judicious.—But the chief object of the Commission being general inquiry, it does not appear, that a better choice could have

been made, than that of a person of Captain Columbine's character and attainments, and of two men, Mr. Ludlam and Mr. Dawes, who had already passed a number of years in Africa, and who were known to be solicitous for its improvement.

But the expense, it is alleged, was large and also useless. The largeness of the expense arose from the delay caused by the loss of the frigate, appointed to carry the Commissioners. A delay of about fifteen months was thus occasioned, during which the salaries of the Commissioners were, according to uniform practice, continued, and an expense of nearly 6000*l.* incurred, which would otherwise have been spared.

But perhaps Mr. Thorpe means to object to the propriety of continuing their salaries to the Commissioners during this their involuntary inaction. If so, the Directors think it necessary to state, not by way of recrimination, but for the purpose of enabling the Institution to judge of the justness of Mr. Thorpe's claim to a character for superior regard to public economy, that he himself enjoyed a salary as Chief Judge, and Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court, at Sierra Leone, for seven years, although his actual residence in the Colony did not exceed twenty-one months. His salary, which was 1500*l.* a-year, commenced from the month of January 1808, and he received it without any deduction for three years and a half before he set his foot within the Colony. But not content with this large sinecure emolument, soon after he landed at Sierra Leone, he demanded of Mr. Smith, the gentleman who had done the whole duty of the office of Judge of the Vice-Admiralty

Court for nearly eighteen months previous to his arrival, to pay over to him all the fees he had received in that capacity; and on Mr. Smith's refusing to comply with this demand, Mr. Thorpe brought an action against him, in the Court in which he himself usually presided, for 1000*l.*; and there pleading his own cause, he obtained a verdict for 320*l.* and actually *compelled* Mr. Smith, by a writ addressed to the Sheriff, to pay this sum within a few days after the verdict had been obtained.—The pleadings on both sides in this extraordinary case are now before the Board.—It ought, however, to be added, that the injustice of this proceeding, when stated to the Government at home by Mr. Smith, appeared so flagrant, that a considerable sum was deducted from Mr. Thorpe's salary, and assigned to Mr. Smith, as a remuneration for his services.

8. Mr. Thorpe blames the Directors for the information they gave to the Navy in their Fifth Report. In one point, that information was certainly erroneous; namely, in their stating it to be necessary that vessels carrying on the Portuguese Slave Trade should have been built in the dominions of Portugal, or condemned in a Portuguese Court of Admiralty. But this, though an erroneous opinion, was one in which, at the time, Mr. Thorpe himself appears to have entirely and unreservedly concurred, as may be seen from several of his own decisions; particularly in the cases of the *Calypso*, *Urbano*, and *Paquete Volantè*. His excuse will probably be, that he was misled into those judgments by the Board. This would be but an inadequate excuse for a learned

judge, even if it were true. But in a communication made to the Directors upwards of a year ago, he distinctly says ; " I never received a single paper from this or any other Society, nor from any public officer. Here or there I never received any information." This would seem to exculpate the Board from the guilt of having biassed Mr. Thorpe's judgment, and to leave the error entirely his own.

As to the charge of having misled the officers of the Navy, with what grace this accusation comes from Mr. Thorpe will appear from the following document. It has been transcribed verbatim from a paper in the handwriting of Lieutenant Pascoe, of his Majesty's gun-brig *Daring*, entitled " Substance of a Conversation, and the Opinion of the Judge of the Admiralty Court at Sierra Leone, June 13, 1812." It is as follows :—

" I take the slave trade in a larger and more comprehensive view than Sir William Scott; and, from much trouble and labour, have made such discoveries of the illicit trade in slaves as would astonish you. But to the question of Spaniards : I am fully of opinion that *they* have no right to trade in Slaves ; and shall always condemn them, until directed otherwise by my Government. Let me turn it which way I will, still it is the same thing at last. The slave trade is contrary to the law of nations, and declared by my country's law as inhuman and unjust. What right then has Spain to carry on this trade? None! Portugal is otherwise. Portugal says to Great Britain, You have brought me from a revolution in Portugal, surely not to plunge me into one in the Bra-

zils by abolishing the Portuguese slave trade. Great Britain says, No; certainly not; but by our treaty you shall be confined to your own Colonies in Africa. Portugal agrees to this, and to do away with this horrid traffic gradually. Thus Portugal knew it to be illegal, and indignantly secures herself by treaty. Spain has no such treaty. If a treaty was necessary for Portugal as an independent nation, surely it was so for Spain.

“Now again we will consider the Americans and Portuguese. The former carries on an extensive trade in Slaves under the Spanish flag. The latter carry on all this vile trade that English capital is embarked in. There are three vessels here now under the Portuguese flag: one was taken on a voyage from Princes to Bahia, from which last place she had come to the coast. This man stated he purchased his Slaves at Princes; but by investigation I discovered that he had been along the Bight of Benin, took his Slaves on board, took them to Princes, where he landed them; and after undergoing a mock sale, he shipt them again.

“To conclude: *a naval officer cannot go wrong in sending a vessel having Slaves on board for adjudication.* If she is condemned, the Slaves are landed, and the necessary certificate granted to obtain the head-money. If the defendants appeal, the vessel may be returned; but the Slaves cannot, as they have no right of property in them. From this it is clear, a naval officer's pocket cannot suffer, although my sentence may not be confirmed.”

The above paper has been submitted to the consi-

deration of two highly respectable naval officers, who served on the African station, and who admit that it exhibits a correct view of the opinions promulgated by the learned judge. Whether the promulgation of such opinions was calculated to tempt the officers of the Navy to make unauthorized seizures, and whether Mr. Thorpe could have any interested motives for so doing, the Directors leave it to others to decide.

At p. 27, Mr. Thorpe refers to his own exposition of the Tenth Article of the Portuguese Treaty, (inserted in the Appendix to his pamphlet), as more correct than that of Lord Castlereagh; and he adds, that "his construction has not yet been overruled by higher authority."—This assertion, it is much to be regretted, is equally incorrect with the rest of his pamphlet. Previous to its appearance, that construction had already been overruled by Sir William Grant, Sir William Scott, and Sir John Nicholl, in the cases of the *Calypso*, *Urbano*, and *Paquete Volante*, and has since been overruled in the case of the *San Juan*. But besides this, the irregularity of Mr. Thorpe's proceedings, as Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Sierra Leone, appears to have produced, in the minds of the Judges of the Prize Appeal Court, a very unfavourable impression of the justice of his decisions; and in that way may have proved materially prejudicial to the general cause of Abolition.

9. Another theme of invective, strangely adduced by Mr. Thorpe, is the conviction of Brodie, Cooke, and Dunbar (p. 20), under the Slave Trade Felony Act. These men were tried at Sierra Leone, in the ex-

minal court of that Colony, in the year 1814, before Robert Purdie, Esq., who, in consequence of Mr. Thorpe's absence, was appointed to act as chief justice, *pro tempore*, in his stead.

The offence charged against them was, trading in slaves in the Rio Pongas; to which Cooke pleaded guilty, and only offered to the Court as an objection in point of law, that his slave factory in that river was described by a wrong name in the indictment.

Dunbar pleaded to the jurisdiction of the Court, that he was a subject of Ferdinand the Seventh; but it appeared, and was notorious in the Colony, that he was a Scotchman by birth, though he had been trading as officer of a Spanish slave ship, from the Rio Pongas to the Havannah, and had on that account assumed the character of a Spaniard. He had been brought into Sierra Leone in the year 1812, on board a slave ship, called the Nueva Constitution, under Spanish colours, of which he was first mate; and having sworn falsely in his examination, had been convicted of perjury before Mr. Thorpe himself, and stood in the pillory by *his* sentence.

Being now identified as the person so punished, a comparison was made between his evidence in the cause of the Nueva Constitution in Nov. 1812, and his account of himself, also on oath, in April 1814, when he was again brought in on board another slave ship, the schooner *San Jose*, of which he called himself first pilot and captain's trade assistant. In the first instance, he deposed, that he was born in St. John's river, *West Florida*, and described himself as *thirty-one* years of age. In the last instance,

only seventeen months later, he represented himself as *forty-one* years old, and deposed that he was born in *East Florida*, under the Spanish flag.

The evidence of his trading in Slaves was clear beyond dispute. It was proved by the Negroes brought to the Colony in the *Nueva Constitucion*, as well as by other witnesses; and does not appear to have been denied by the prisoner himself.

Brodie pleaded not guilty, but was convicted on direct and satisfactory evidence. Two boys, whom he had himself personally bought as Slaves in Africa, and shipped as such by his agent, proved those facts against him; and his only defence was, a weak attempt to shift off the offence from himself to an African woman with whom he cohabited, and who was in fact one of his agents at a slave factory which he owned in the *Rio Pongas*.

These three convicts were sentenced to transportation for fourteen years, and, being brought to England under their sentence, were placed on board the hulks, preparatory to their being sent to Botany Bay. But they have been recently pardoned by the Crown; and as Mr. Thorpe uses that fact with exultation, in support of his invectives against the Government of Sierra Leone, assuming that the injustice of the conviction was the cause of the pardon, it is right to state distinctly the ground upon which the Prince Regent was most properly advised to pardon and release them.

It was nothing more nor less than this, that the judge who filled Mr. Thorpe's seat in his absence, *following the precedents of his learned pre-*



*decessor Mr. Thorpe himself*, had tried and convicted those men without any lawful jurisdiction to do so. The convictions, therefore, were not merely erroneous, but absolutely void in law; and it was for that reason only, and not from any doubt of the guilt of the prisoners, (who, from the enormity of their offences, well deserved the fate to which they were sentenced,) that the pardon was granted, on a report of the law officers of the Crown.

The felonious acts of which these men were convicted were all perpetrated in the Rio Pongas, which is not within the limits of the territory of Sierra Leone, or any way dependent thereon, and therefore clearly not within the jurisdiction of the criminal court of that Colony, which is limited to the trial of offences arising within the Colony itself, or its dependencies.—But Mr. Thorpe had, while in the exercise of the same jurisdiction, tried several slave traders, convicted three, and sentenced one of them to seven years' transportation, and another to three years' hard labour on the public works, in cases to all of which the same objection applied; for the offences were all committed without the local limits of the Colony or its dependencies. In one of the cases, that of Samuel Samo, tried by Mr. Thorpe in April 1812, the locality of the felonious acts was identically the same as in the cases of Cooke, Brodie, and Dunbar; namely, in the Rio Pongas; and in that case, the objection that it was a foreign territory had been taken on the part of the prisoner, but overruled by the Court. The law was consequently regarded as settled on that point by

Mr. Thorpe's authority, which was probably the reason that neither Cooke, Brodie, nor Dunbar, objected on the same ground to the jurisdiction of the Court.

Mr. Purdie, therefore, who was not by education a lawyer, seems to have been very excusable in supposing his jurisdiction too clear for dispute; and the Governor, a military officer, who had appointed him to that situation, as the fittest person he could find to be *locum tenens* of the office in Mr. Thorpe's absence, there being no man bred to the legal profession in the Colony, was at least equally blameless.

If both, however, had been culpable, Mr. Thorpe surely was the last man from whom they could have apprehended censure. To *him* they might reasonably have referred rather for explanation and defence. It must astonish any man, therefore, who has not previously considered other parts of that extraordinary pamphlet, to find the learned judge arraigning his unlearned successor as well as the Governor in the harshest terms for these convictions, and calling them the "*most unprecedented pieces of judicial ignorance and cruelty ever recorded.*"

It is true, that he here takes into the account, on the strength of his own assertion, that Cooke and Dunbar were foreigners; but as to Cooke, it does not appear that this was even alleged by him on the trial, and he *pleaded guilty to the indictment*. In Dunbar's case, the defence was put in issue, and found against him by the jury, which makes the charge of judicial ignorance in that respect plainly irrelevant; and as to Brodie, whose conviction Mr.

Thorpe speaks of with equal asperity, and in whose pardon he equally exults, his national character is not denied, even by this hardy apologist himself, to be British.

It is to be remarked, that Mr. Thorpe does not appear, even at this time, at all to apprehend the true nature of that legal objection to these and to his own convictions, on the ground of which the pardon was granted. The Act, he says, (*i.e.* the Act of 51 Geo. III. cap. 23, which makes slave-trading felony), attaches only to British subjects, or others in *British territory*, and his language throughout supposes that the men had committed no legal offence, because the territory was foreign; whereas, supposing them to be British subjects, as they all in fact were, and as one of them is admitted to be, they were guilty of felony for trading in the Rio Pongas or any other foreign territory, as clearly as if the act had been committed in Sierra Leone, or elsewhere within the King's dominions.

On the other hand, if the Rio Pongas had been *British territory*, the legal objection would nevertheless have applied, because it is not within the local jurisdiction of the courts of Sierra Leone. The sole but decisive impeachment of these convictions is, that the criminals were convicted in a wrong court; and it is on the ground of this blunder alone, of which Mr. Thorpe himself was the parent, that he feels himself intitled not only to inveigh against his successor, and against the Governor of Sierra Leone, but to call for public commiseration of the convicts as innocent and persecuted men!!!

Mr. Thorpe, even on his confused and inexplicable views of the subject, feels that his own conviction of Samo stands in his way; and to prevent the lash from falling on himself, alleges that he had "*insurmountable difficulties* in that case," and that, "to prevent his reasons from being publicly known (lest they might affect the abolition cause)," he had secretly informed the Governor that he could not pronounce the sentence directed by the Act, and advised the pardon of the prisoner, in consideration of the chiefs connected with him in the Rio Pongas soliciting in his favour, and agreeing to renounce the slave trade.

If this explanation were correct in point of fact, to what does it amount? What were the difficulties which he stated to the Governor? Difficulties the judge might well have; for that Samo was a Dutchman, a reader of the trial will feel little doubt, and Mr. Thorpe the judge (who tried the fact as to his national character, not by the jury on the issue of not guilty, on which the question arose, *BUT UPON AFFIDAVITS IN ARREST OF JUDGMENT*,) held that the insufficiency of the prisoner's evidence to prove himself a foreigner subjected him to be convicted as a British subject, though domiciled in the Rio Pongas and seized at the Isles de Los\*. In other words, he laid the *onus probandi* on a man charged with a felony, to prove himself not guilty of it, in an Act *prima*

\* See the printed trials of Samo, Peters, and Tufft, for slave-trading; printed by Sherwood and Co., Paternoster Row, in 1813; a work evidently published either by Mr. Thorpe himself, or by one of his friends.

*for* lawful, as being sanctioned by the law of the place where he resided!!!

It is not strange that the judge should have felt some doubts as to transporting a man on such a conviction. Unfortunately, however, no intimation of his doubts, whatever they were, was given to the public. His speech on suspending the sentence is, on the contrary, a laboured eulogium on the prosecution and verdict; and the subsequent pardon was treated by him as an act of great though judicious lenity.

If a doubt could afterwards have remained in Sierra Leone, whether by the authoritative opinion of Mr. Thorpe, men could be convicted of felony in his court, for acts of slave trading out of the local limits of the Colony, the doubt would have been soon removed; for in June 1812, two months after the conviction of Samo, he tried and convicted Joseph Peters and William Tuft, for sending and carrying several Negroes as slaves from Bance Island and Pery, and selling them at various places in Africa; the places of export being out of the local jurisdiction of Sierra Leone, and the places of sale not even British factories, but in all respects as much foreign as the Rio Pongas itself. Nor did he in these later cases, scruple to pass sentences of transportation, and of labour on the public works\*. If these men are still suffering under his sentences, it is clear they ought to be pardoned, on account of

\* See the printed trials last referred to, in which Mr. Thorpe, or his friend the Editor, claims great merit for these convictions.

the same blunder of which Cooke, Brodie, and Dunbar, have had the benefit.

It is needless to say more of the charges in question, or the strange inconsistency of the accuser; but it may be important to state that there would have been a defect of trial at Sierra Leone in such cases, even if Mr. Thorpe had read and understood the Act of Parliament which he undertook to execute, except that in this case the defect would have been soon supplied. If slave-traders, whether foreign or British, could have been tried at Sierra Leone under the Stat. 51 Geo. III. cap. 23, commonly called Mr. Brougham's Act, for offences committed out of the limits of the Colony, it must have been by virtue of a commission issued by the Crown, in pursuance of the Act of 11 and 12 Will. III. cap. 7, entitled, An Act passed for the more effectual Suppression of Piracy. But it now appears, that no such commission had been sent to Sierra Leone; though in all our old colonies in the West Indies and America, it has usually formed one of the standing commissions issued and transmitted to the Governor. That this instrument was not sent to Sierra Leone, when a Royal Government was first constituted in that Colony, is not justly imputable as a fault to the Ministers of that day, nor can their successors fairly be blamed for not supplying the omission. From the peculiar character of the settlement it was unnecessary, and would hardly have been proper, to assimilate it in this respect to the colonies in the new world, until Mr. Brougham's Act, by creating the offence of slave-

trading a felony, and referring the jurisdiction over it, to courts constituted according to the provisions of the Stat. 11 and 12 Will. III. and other statutes, made it necessary, or very desirable at least, that a commission under that Act should authorise the trying of this particular offence when committed in foreign parts of Africa, at the Colony of Sierra Leone; for the other courts, to which jurisdiction is given by Mr. Brougham's Act, cannot be constituted there. But the propriety of inquiring whether a commission under 11 and 12 Will. III. called the Pirates' Act, existed in Sierra Leone, was not then adverted to by the Directors of the African Institution, who have been in the habit of suggesting to Government the measures necessary for promoting the suppression of the slave trade in that part of the world; and on this account, the omission was very naturally overlooked in the government offices. The Directors feel that some neglect may reasonably be imputed to themselves in this respect; but the person beyond all proportion the most in fault, for not pointing out the defect, is the person who now arraigns the Colonial Government for its consequences—Mr. Thorpe himself. It was his duty when first applied to, early in 1812, in Samo's case, to try a felony under Mr. Brougham's Act, to examine his authority; and if he had either looked into that Act or into his own commission, he must immediately have seen the necessity of applying to the Governor to constitute a court under the statute of William. It would then have been found that the royal commission, directed by that statute,

was wanting ; the defect would have been officially notified to his Majesty's Government; and the commission might have been transmitted to Sierra Leone before the end of 1812. But through the incomprehensible blunder of this judge in trying, under his *colonial* commission, felonies committed in the Rio Pongas, the omission in question remained unsupplied and unknown at the trial of Brodie and the others in 1814 ; and he now, by a new blunder, not less incomprehensible, exults in consequences which his own illegal conduct has produced, and calls the attention of the public to facts which redound to his own discredit.

The escape of those criminals from-merited punishment, and the like impunity which must be extended to the persons convicted by himself, are every way imputable to Mr. Thorpe ; because they might have been sent to England, and tried here under the Statute 33d Henry VIII. And this course would unquestionably have been taken by the Governor, had the Judge pointed out to him the defect of the local jurisdiction in the earlier cases, and that defect had not been supplied.

There being no other man but Mr. Thorpe professing himself a lawyer in the Colony, the Governor could have no such advice, except from the man who has now the effrontery to arraign his conduct on the score of these convictions, and to charge them on the *judicial ignorance* of his successor !!!

As to the respectful and sympathetic style in which he speaks of these men—one of whom he had himself adjudged to the pillory, and all of whom he admits



to have been traders in Slaves—it would be difficult to explain it even on the premises assumed by Mr. Thorpe himself. With his affected zeal for the abolition cause it is still less reconcilable, but is perfectly consistent with the true feelings of a man who labours to vilify the most distinguished and faithful among the leaders in that cause.

10. The trial and condemnation of Bostwick and Macquin, mentioned by Mr. Thorpe (p. 19), in terms of strong censure, stand on precisely the same ground with those of Brodie, Dunbar, and Cooke. His own precedent was exactly followed in both cases, and followed with confidence, because, in addition to the weight of his recorded judgment, his successor had every reason, from the tenor of Mr. Thorpe's private communications, to believe that the proceeding would obtain the cordial sanction of his learned predecessor in office. Some of these communications will be given hereafter.—Of the guilt of the parties there did not exist the slightest doubt: they themselves admitted it on the trial; and as Mr. Thorpe had previously settled the question of the competency of the Court to try such offenders, there appeared to be no other course for Mr. Purdie to pursue but to pronounce on them the sentence of the law.

After these persons had been brought to England, they presented a petition to the Prince Regent, acknowledging their crime, and imploring mercy. "Your Petitioners, with sore contrition and repentance for the crime of which they pleaded guilty, implore your Royal Highness, &c." Again: "The re-

pentance of your miserable petitioners is sincere ; and in the awful example which they have already exhibited to Africa and the world, your petitioners look up with trembling hope to your Royal Highness."

It is some satisfaction to know, that although these men, through the strange oversight of Mr. Thorpe, were tried before a wrong court, they had yet unquestionably incurred the penalty of the law. They were British subjects found engaged in an extensive slave trade, which they had been carrying on for six years after it had been abolished by their country, and for two years after it had been pronounced to be a felony.

11. Mr. Thorpe severely censures also the conduct of Governor Maxwell, and of Captain Scobell and Captain Maxwell of his Majesty's Navy, for having attacked and destroyed the slave factories in the rivers Mesurado and Pongas, and liberated the Slaves found in them. This he calls invading with fire and sword the territory of our allies, carrying away their subjects, destroying their possessions, &c. p. 20.

The slave factories which were destroyed belonged *exclusively* to British or American subjects. They were planted on ground which had been originally obtained from the Native Chiefs, but over which the native jurisdiction did not *practically* extend. They were situated on the banks of navigable rivers, and were entirely distinct and separate from any town or village of the natives. The attack and destruc-

tion of these factories Mr. Thorpe calls *an invasion of the territories of our allies*. The liberation of the captives detained in the slave yard, or in the slave chain, of these contemnors of the laws of their country, he chooses to denominate *a carrying away of the subjects of those allies*. And the demolition of the store-houses, and slave-holds of these British and American miscreants, he calls *destroying the possessions of the natives*.

- The misrepresentation of the case is so gross as to require only to be stated.

- It is obvious, that if the subjects or the enemies of the King can fix themselves as slave-traders on the navigable rivers of Africa, and pursue, without molestation, their nefarious practices, on the pretence that they are under the jurisdiction of native chiefs;—if factories and even forts erected by such persons, in defiance of the laws of their country, shall be considered as placed beyond the reach of British controul;—if the armed vessels of his Majesty entering these rivers, are not to be allowed to question the conduct, or interrupt the criminal pursuits, of these piratical depredators; there is, in that case, an end of all hope either of extinguishing the slave trade, or of civilizing Africa.

But in Africa such a principle never has been, and never can be, acted upon. No one has ever doubted the right of this country to controul and punish the conduct of persons residing in our different establishments on the Gold Coast. But these establishments differ from the factories in the Rio Pongas only in this, that they are stronger and less

assailable. The forts on the Gold Coast, however, are equally within the territorial limits of the native powers, as the factories in the Rio Pongas. The only *legal* tenure, in both cases, is the payment of a rent to the native chiefs. If, therefore, a force were to be landed from a frigate to punish rebellion, or any other crime, at Cape Coast Castle, or Anamaboo, or Dixcove, it would, in principle, be as much an invasion of the territory of peaceful allies, as if the same force were landed at Cape Mesurado, or in the Rio Pongas, in order to arrest and punish the felons who were there carrying on the slave trade. And if in the former case, his Majesty's officers would be justified in attacking a native force, which should range itself on the side of the criminals, they would be equally so in the latter.

But it is time to shew what countenance these general positions, no less than the particular conduct which Mr. Thorpe condemns with such unmeasured vehemence, may be considered as deriving from his own authority.

On the 6th of August, 1812, Mr. Thorpe addressed the following letter to Governor Maxwell:—

“ My dear Sir,

“ I shall lay by the subject I was on, to write a few lines on a subject arising from your letter, as it may be of service to you when I am far away, or no more. In truth, Governors are so often ruined by actions in the Courts, and harassed by charges before the Council, that a friend at a distance is almost for ever agitated, as it is difficult to find a precise

rule of conduct. The powers by Commission and the Royal Instructions will guide in many cases; but the most secure mode to consider a doubtful case, I think, is this. The authority of a Governor is a delegation of the powers of the Crown. No man can delegate powers he has not: therefore, the Governor's power can never exceed the King's power, unless specially given by Act of Parliament. For instance, in the case of Samo and Hickson, I was miserable until a conviction took place; and it made me press on Mr. Biggs the necessity of getting the chiefs to place the White men under your jurisdiction, because it not only extends the power of England, but *it enables you to exercise a most useful power hereafter without danger to yourself*; and I hope you will extend this power whenever you can induce the chiefs to surrender their jurisdiction as Mungo Katty did. *I shall strongly represent this, and shew its great utility, in England.*—But look to our state if conviction had not taken place, and those fellows had pursued you to England.

“I have stated thus much from my sincere esteem; and when I am absent and you more elevated, in a moment of difficulty, on cool consideration, it may be useful. *I am convinced it is not only your wish not to assume power, but ever to use that entrusted to you with the utmost utility and clemency*; and when there is no positive rule, it is well to have a general principle as a guiding star.”

So highly did Mr. Thorpe value the services performed by Mr. Biggs in the Rio Pongas, that in another letter to Governor Maxwell, written on the

23d July 1812, he observed: " Now as to the business he performed in the Rio Pongas, I am convinced you are too deeply indebted to him by his extricating you from a most severe difficulty ; the friends of the Abolition are too deeply indebted to him for his exertions in the slave trade ; and Great Britain is too deeply indebted to him *for the exterritorial right he has established on the coast for her*, ever to think of remunerating him here. I should advise his being desired to put every thing down ; and when you are satisfied of the truth of every item, sign it, and let him take it to the Lords of the Treasury, who are the proper judges of such service, and you will be relieved from an expense and an embarrassment \*."

In a letter, dated the 10th August 1812, Mr. Thorpe recurs to this general subject. " You have already " (he is writing to Governor Maxwell) " induced some Chiefs to place the inhabitants, not Black, under your jurisdiction. *Continue this ; it will be easily accomplished : extend it from Cape de Verd to Cape Negro † : two years will effect it : you will then have extended the jurisdiction and exterritorial right of Great Britain over a quarter of the world she never expected.*"

But even before these letters were written, the judgment which Mr. Thorpe pronounced from the Bench on Samuel Samo, a slave-trader in the Rio

\* The advice given by the learned judge was adopted by Mr. Biggs, and the schedule of his services will be found in the Appendix, F.

† Namely from 15° North Lat. to 15° South Lat.

Pongas, apprehended at the Isles de Los, a place also out of the jurisdiction of Sierra Leone, shews what was *then* the doctrine which he wished to establish on this point, and how much at variance it is with his present views. "The prisoner," he observed, "has domiciled above sixteen years in the Rio Pongas. This may be considered foreign dominions, *but the Chiefs of that country consider the White men as British subjects, and they also consider themselves British subjects.* They have claimed, in cases of distress, British protection and received it: they purchase, reside, and trade as British subjects, not as Africans. The prisoner has derived every advantage and protection from the English law: he must not now violate it with impunity: we cannot suffer this state of oscillation. Is he one moment to be within the pale of our laws and protection, and the next out of the pale of its coercion?" Again: "As to the prisoners having resided in a *foreign* country, whose laws were the rule of his conduct, and that he is not to be brought before a tribunal whose authority he does not acknowledge, I cannot allow it to be a fair statement. I have already shewn that he must be considered as a British subject, and *amenable to our law*; but *English law is the rule of action even in the Rio Pongas,*" &c. See "Trials of the Slave Traders at Sierra Leone in April and June 1812, before the Hon. R. Thorpe," &c. printed in London in 1813, for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, pages 31 and 32.

On precisely the same views does Mr. Thorpe appear to have proceeded in his judicial decisions. in

the Admiralty Court; and several instances occurred in which he condemned to his Majesty, natives of Africa, rescued from slavery, under circumstances similar to those of the persons who were liberated from the slave factories in the Rio Pongas. In proof of this, it is sufficient to refer to the judgments pronounced by him on the 24th of February 1812, in the case of certain Slaves, seized in Sangamar river, and others seized at Dakar.—It is left to Mr. Thorpe to reconcile these contradictions.

12. The Sixth Report is charged with “complete ignorance of the West Coast of Africa, the state of the slave trade, and the Portuguese possessions.”—To this no reply seems necessary: sufficient proof has already been given of the value of Mr. Thorpe’s mere assertion.

13. Mr. Thorpe next quotes a passage from the 28th page of the Sixth Report, in which Captain Cuffee is represented as stating, that the Colony of Sierra Leone was improving; and that the effect of the pains taken in instructing the youth, from the moment the Colony was first formed, appeared in the superior intelligence of the rising race of Colonists: and he adds this remark;—“I saw Mr. Cuffee in Sierra Leone: he appeared a man of truth and observation; and I know he constantly lamented, while in the Colony, the dreadful state of depravity into which it was sunk. From this, and the general fallaciousness of the Report, I am led to conclude he never gave such incorrect information.” (p. 14.)



It will here be sufficient to state that the information of Captain Caffee was given on the 27th August, 1811, in the presence of the following persons: viz. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester; the Right Hon. J. C. Villiers; W. Allen, Esq.; T. F. Forster, Esq.; J. de Ponthieu, Esq.; G. Harrison, Esq.; M. Martin, Esq.; Z. Macaulay, Esq.; James Stephen, Esq.; H. Thornton, Esq.; and J. R. Williams, Esq.

14. Mr. Thorpe, with his usual candour, insinuates, that the Board wished to conceal the affair of the 167 slaves, alleged to have been sold at Sierra Leone. (p. 16.)—This matter has already been fully explained in a preceding part of this Report. (p. 54.)

15. Mr. Thompson, he alleges, would not continue to "furnish fallacious documents for the African Institution." (p. 16.)—Mr. Thompson, however, did continue to make statements to the Board, the truth of which Mr. Thorpe is pleased to controvert, down to the time that he heard of his recall.

16. "Truth and honour," says Mr. Thorpe, "were Mr. Thompson's disqualifications. He was recalled. But they have had a Governor for nearly four years perfectly suited to their wishes." (p. 16.) This points, of course, to Colonel Maxwell, whom, as well as the Directors of the African Institution, Mr. Thorpe would insinuate to be destitute of truth and honour, and indisposed to promote the civilization of Africa.—To this insinuation, as it respects

Colonel Maxwell, it may be sufficient to oppose the following letter, written by Mr. Thorpe himself, the very week he quitted Sierra Leone, after he had had a full opportunity, for nearly two years, of observing Colonel Maxwell's conduct; had sat with him in Council; and had given his direct sanction to almost every act of that gentleman's administration. The letter is dated at Sierra Leone, March 16th, 1813, and is as follows:—

“ My dear Sir,

“ My last duty in the Colony being performed, permit me to express the first wish of my heart, which is, that the happy terms in which we have lived for two years, might be as well known in England as it is here; therefore hope, that in writing to the Secretary of State, you will relate, as I feel you think, that I have done my duty strictly; that what little aid I could give to your administration, I performed cheerfully; that I have made some exertions in support of the Abolition; and that in private I have not poisoned the convivial banquet. I have ever been ready to acknowledge the zeal with which you have assisted my public efforts, and anxiously proclaimed, that every comfort I experienced in private life has arisen from your kind attention, which absolutely anticipated my wants, and preserved me from every annoyance. I well remember often thinking that the friendship I had formed with you and poor Fiddle would repay me for the calamities I was naturally likely to encounter, and will sincerely declare

that although I have lost the one, yet the pleasure I have had from the cordiality of intercourse I have experienced with the other, has compensated for every curtailment of comfort, and every estrangement I have experienced from joys the highest in life. Be assured I shall be ever ready to tell most truly how sincerely I feel obliged, and how faithfully I am your friend,

(Signed) "ROBERT THORPE."

This is only one of various letters in the same strain which might be produced. In another, dated Dec. 23, 1812, he states himself "perfectly satisfied that you never expend public money, but for public advantage."—Again: on the 12th of February 1813, after proposing the appointment of an officer allowed in other Colonies, "called naval officer," he observes: "By Wednesday I think we could settle every thing to your satisfaction; and then I *REALLY know of NOTHING wanted in your Government but public buildings.*"—On the 23d of February 1813, he recurs to this subject: "*EVERY salutary act for the Colony seems to be passed; NO ONE THING seems to require my remaining; and UNNECESSARILY to sacrifice my life to the climate would be insanity.*"—On the 8th of March 1813, he writes: "When I am far from you, I sincerely hope you will have health and happiness, and find those around you as attached and as faithfully your friend as Robert Thorpe." And on the 13th of the same month he adds; "I shall take a further opportunity to express how much you have contributed to my

comfort, how much obliged I have been, how truly grateful I am, and how faithfully I shall remain yours ever, Robert Thorpe."

These different letters are addressed to the man whom he now stigmatizes as "destitute of truth and honour." And here it is worthy of remark, that Mr. Thorpe appears to have continued to speak in terms of high commendation of the administration of Governor Maxwell, even in his representations to Government, down to a very recent period; namely, the period that Governor Maxwell, on his return to England in September last, deemed it his duty to prefer grave and serious charges against Mr. Thorpe, before the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department.—The Governor appears to have endeavoured, by every civility and attention which he could give to Mr. Thorpe while at Sierra Leone, to soften and counteract those unbridled tempers which are said to have obliged him previously to quit his judicial situation in Upper Canada; but with so little effect that he was at last compelled, for the sake of the peace, and, as he conceived, of the very existence of the Colony, to prefer those complaints against Mr. Thorpe which have issued in his dismissal.

17. Mr. Thorpe (p. 17) charges the Seventh Report of the Institution with *fallaciously* representing "that the slave trade was diminishing."—That Report was made to the Subscribers in March 1812. On the 10th of August in the same year, Mr. Thorpe, in a letter to Governor Maxwell thus expresses himself: "*Consider how largely, how extensively, we have*

*crippled the slave trade. We have closely bound up the Portuguese; we have terrified the Americans, and put to flight the Spaniards. My decisions are all known. ANY ONE CAN FOLLOW THEM UP. I cannot add to what I have done."* Again: on the 23d of February 1813, when endeavouring, as in the former letter, to justify his early return to England, he observes; "And now, my good Sir, when you consider how wonderfully the Almighty has preserved my life and spared my health, with the weight that I have about my neck, you would consider me unjustifiable in hazarding a third wet season. Besides, when you consider all the present circumstances, *there seems an INTERVAL in the slave trade. Should it REVIVE, I may be stronger to meet it."*

If the representation of the Board, that the slave trade was diminishing, were fallacious, what shall be said of these representations of Mr. Thorpe?

18. On the subject of the captured Negroes, of whose treatment Mr. Thorpe makes such heavy complaints, it will be sufficient to refer to the statement which has been already made in the general Report of this year, and to the documents which are subjoined to it. It will appear from that statement, that the officers of Government who had charge of the captured Negroes, exerted themselves far beyond what was required of them, either by the Act of Parliament, or by the Order in Council founded upon it, in providing for their wants, securing their comfort, and promoting their happiness and improvement; and that they took prompt measures to remedy such

evils as almost unavoidably sprung up in the first instance, in the conduct of a new and hitherto untried and delicate experiment.

The exceeding difficulty of making any satisfactory arrangement on this important point, was always obvious to those persons who took an active interest in the matter ; and many ineffectual attempts have been made to overcome or remove them. Several regulations were suggested to the Council Board, which it was supposed might have proved advantageous to the liberated Negroes, but the Directors were not so fortunate as to procure their adoption. The failure of their wishes on this point, however, is chiefly to be regretted as it respects the West Indies. At Sierra Leone, the judicious measures of Governor Maxwell, as they are detailed in the Report of the year, scarcely seem to admit of improvement, excepting in what regards the more extensive instruction of the captives, and the enlistment of the men into his Majesty's service, on which a few remarks will be made. The following extract of a letter, recently received from Sierra Leone, and written without any view to the present inquiry, will serve to confirm this general statement :—

“ We have uniformly followed the plan begun at Cabenda \*, and all the captured Negroes not enlisted have been sent out into the country at once. *Of late there have been no more apprenticed.*—There are at present the following captured negro towns, viz. Bam-

\* A town settled by the captives landed from the Brig. Agent, while Captain Bones was acting Governor of Sierra Leone.

barra Town, Leicester, Cabenda, Cusso Town, Bassa Town near the False Cape, Portuguese Town to the west of Leicester, Kissy Town near Robiss, and Kenneth's Town on the Hogbrook, between five and six miles back in the mountains from Freetown. This last contains upwards of six hundred inhabitants. They have all built houses according to their different country fashions, and make very great progress in cultivating the land.—We now give them all two complete suits of English clothes on first landing which they are afterwards obliged to provide for themselves ; and they are much more respectable in appearance than many of the Settlers. The land allotted them is clearing very fast, and there is no doubt but that they will be in a very short time the most independent part of the Colony. They do not, like the others, spend any part of their money in rum.—We have made so many of the young captives masons, that that species of labour has fallen one fourth. It will be the same with the carpenters in a very short time.”

But supposing the case to have been otherwise ; supposing it to have been as bad as Mr. Thorpe represents it to be, it is difficult to conceive that he himself could have been free from a large share of blame. He was the first magistrate in the Colony. He was also a member of the Council. His own letter of the 16th March, 1813, already quoted, acknowledges that the Governor always seconded with zeal his public efforts. It is fair then to inquire whether he interfered, either as a judge, or as a member of the Government, to check, or prevent the

abuses of which he now complains? Whether, at the time, he made any distinct representation on the subject? Whether he proposed any Minute in Council, with a view of remedying, or even marking and protesting against, the evils which he now affirms to have existed? To these questions the Directors believe that a negative answer must be given. In the series of his correspondence with Governor Maxwell, they can find no allusion to the subject, except what may be implied in the general expressions already quoted, in which he praises that gentleman's administration; such as that *every salutary act had now been passed—there remained nothing more for him to do—nothing was now wanted in the Colony but public buildings, &c.*

If Mr. Thorpe's present statements on the subject of the captured Negroes are true, what excuse can he make for the utter neglect of his plain and obvious duty as a magistrate and a member of Council—that of protecting them from oppression?

The Directors, however, believe that those statements are unfounded. They have prosecuted their inquiries into the subject with much solicitude; and the only particular instance of oppression they have been able to discover, since the period of Mr. Thorpe's arrival in the Colony, is one of which the learned judge himself appears to have been guilty. On the 29th February, 1812, he addressed the following note to "George Christie, Esq. of the Royal African Corps commanding at Fort Thornton;" viz.—



"Dear Sir,

"I beg you will put the three boys named Jack, Sabba, and Tody\*, that I send up, *to a good deal of work, and very little food for three months, for stealing, or being accessory to the theft of, two goats big in kid.*

"Your most humble Servant,

(Signed) "ROBERT THORPE."

The Directors understand that these boys underwent no trial whatever, (indeed the vagueness of the charge against them implies that it had not been judicially established); but that they were subjected to this severe discipline by the arbitrary will of the learned judge. And, as an aggravation of the circumstance, it is further affirmed, that the goats were the property of Mr. Thorpe himself.

Mr. Thorpe exclaims with great vehemence against the practice of entering the captured Africans into his Majesty's sea and land service, as being *slavery* under another name. It is obvious, however, that here, if his complaint were ever so well founded, the law, and the law alone, is in fault; and no blame fairly attaches either to the servants of Government or to the African Institution. The Directors indeed, have great reason to fear, that abuses may have existed in the recruiting department; but they believe that those abuses exist no longer; and that the only question which need now

\* Three captured Negroes.

be agitated respects the expediency of continuing the present system of enlistment, as the same is authorized by Act of Parliament. They undoubtedly conceive, that that system would admit of many beneficial modifications ; and they are most anxious, not only that those modifications should be adopted, but that every abuse should be guarded against, and every charge of misconduct rigorously investigated, and, if well founded, severely punished. But they agree with the highly respectable Editor of Mr. Mungo Park's last Mission to Africa, that occasional abuses, particularly if those abuses admit of an easy remedy, ought not to be urged "as valid arguments against the practice itself, *if it should be ascertained to be on the whole beneficial to the Africans.*"

"It has been stated," adds the same acute writer, "by enlightened and benevolent persons, who have witnessed the state of slavery in the West Indies, and the assertion has every appearance of probability, that the embodying and employment of black troops has had the happiest effect in elevating and improving the negro character, and in giving a greater degree of importance to that oppressed race.

"In the instance of Sierra Leone, to which these observations more immediately relate, compare the situation of a captured Negro, when rescued from the horrors of a slave vessel, with that of the same man a short time afterwards, when serving as a British soldier ! The ordinary condition of human life has nothing similar to this change : it is a transition from the most abject misery, to ease, comfort, and com-

parative dignity." \*—*Appendix to Mungo Park's last Mission*, p. xcv.

This was probably the view which Mr. Thorpe himself took of this subject while he was yet at Sierra Leone, although he now professes to hold an opinion so widely different. In a letter addressed to Governor Maxwell on the 10th August, 1812, he congratulates that gentleman on his having opened to Great Britain "such a means of recruiting her army as she never dreamt of." "Here then," he adds, "is an extension of territory, an augmentation of trade, and an increase of land and sea forces sufficient to maintain every possession, without sacrificing the lives of her European inhabitants†."

Who could have expected to find Mr. Thorpe loudly inveighing against the system which, two years before, he had so strenuously recommended?

Although the annual Report answers the general charges of Mr. Thorpe, respecting the captured Slaves, the Directors will here advert to one of them, which is made particularly prominent. "The women and girls," it is said, "were selected for the basest purposes," p. 24. Mr. Thorpe adds in a note; "The conduct of those high in office, with respect to the captured negro girls, is now under consideration;" alluding, the Directors presume, to some counter-charges, which, notwithstanding the uniformly laudatory strain of his former statements respecting Go-

\* See the general Report of the present year, for a farther elucidation of this subject.

† The whole of this letter will be found in the Appendix, G.

vernor Maxwell's administration, he has thought it right to prefer against that gentleman.

The Directors have taken pains to investigate the truth of this very serious imputation; but they have hitherto met with no evidence (excepting that of Mr. Thorpe himself), either oral or documentary, to support it, as far as it is applicable to any of those persons on whom Mr. Thorpe can be anxious to fix the charge.

19. Mr. Thorpe has dwelt much on the low state of morals at Sierra Leone; and there is doubtless much truth in the representation. When the nature of the population of that Colony is considered, composed as it is of Nova-Scotian Blacks, who in early life were habituated to all the licence which is incident to a state of slavery; of Maroons, who in Jamaica lived in the practice of polygamy, and of the other vices which disfigure the face of society in our West-Indian Islands; and of native Africans, as yet unacquainted with the obligations of Christianity or the restraints of civilized life; the Directors cannot wonder that there should be great room for complaint on this head, and they very earnestly desire that an adequate remedy were applied. If, however, there should be any truth in much concurrent information which they have received, they cannot help entertaining some doubts, whether the example of even Mr. Thorpe himself was peculiarly calculated to diminish the evil.

20. Mr. Thorpe has also dwelt much on the backward state of cultivation in the Colony; but he has omit-

ted to inform the public, that this backwardness arose, in part at least, from the effects of a law framed by himself, namely, the Militia Act. This law was so obnoxious to a large part of the Settlers, that they preferred abandoning their farms and houses, and quitting the Colony entirely, to submitting to its provisions. Many of them did actually abandon the Colony on this account, and left their farms to desolation. The measures which Mr. Thorpe was disposed to pursue on this occasion, may be inferred from the following letter which he addressed on the 31st March, 1812, to Governor Maxwell :—

“ My dear Sir,

“ Though I commend most highly your general benevolence, yet I cannot agree with you in pitying S— \*. He assured me, that he saw no harm in the Militia Act, and that the Maroons ought to submit to it, and that he would enrol himself. He has not done so, evidently because the party he leads are adverse; is a combined phalanx of ignorance, obstinacy, and determination, not to be broken through. Are three hundred persons armed, active, hardy, combined, and resolute men, not to be separated, disorganized and subdued? S— has made over his property to J. M. They will not part with a dollar. *They disseminate the doctrine that a soldier is a degraded person because he may be flogged, and that any person that would be a soldier is beneath themselves* †. For what good is all this? If this knot is

\* One of the principal Maroons.

† Compare this with Mr. Thorpe's *present* opinions respecting soldiery.

not untied, *I would sever it*. This spirit has grown and strengthened too much. I conceive them \* silent, plotting, obstinate, vicious, ignorant, devils, dangerous in any society, but particularly so in a government like yours, open to a variety of circumstances that cannot be foreseen. I do conceive S—— criminal in his ingratitude to you, and at the head of this unyielding, cemented, vicious clan, that would be dangerous if they dare. You know, my dear Sir, it is my principle to give you my opinion honestly. They cannot be injurious with you; but you will not be always here: a weak government will make them strong, and what they could do, they would do.

“ Ever yours most truly,

(Signed)

“ ROBT. THORPE.”

Had it not been for the moderation and forbearance of Governor Maxwell, these violent counsels might have produced the most calamitous consequences. By pursuing a more lenient course, the Settlers were reclaimed to their duty, returned to the Colony, and resumed their farms, but not until a month or two after Mr. Thorpe had quitted it.

The Directors have no intention of blaming the Militia Act, which occasioned this defection, and the consequent decrease of cultivation in the Colony. The Act, they believe, was framed on the model of other colonial acts of the same description, and some such act was clearly necessary.

\* Viz. the Settlers.

Those evils may, therefore, be fairly ascribed to the unreasonableness of the Settlers\*. But when Mr. Thorpe was representing the backward state of cultivation in the Colony, during the twenty-one months he resided there, it would only have been fair in him to state, that this was to be ascribed neither to the Sierra Leone Company nor to the African Institution; but, in great part at least, to the Act of which he himself was the author, and the provisions of which he was disposed to enforce with so much rigour.

The Colony, however, appears to have afterwards recovered from this temporary depression.

On the subject of the trade of the Colony, the Directors refer to the Report of the year.

21. Mr. Thorpe calls on the Directors (p. 15) to shew any one instance of civilization they have effected, or even attempted; and he affirms (pp. 34, 35), that they have performed *no* part of what they promised to the public. That more has not been done in the great work of African civilization, is a subject of at least as deep regret to the Directors as to Mr. Thorpe. But while they have been prevented by

\*Mr. Thorpe adduces the disaffection of the Settlers under the Company's Government, as an argument against the Company. But if the mere fact of disaffection proved any thing, would not his own administration stand condemned? The governed, however, and not the governors, may be the persons to be blamed. The disaffection of the Settlers under the Company was the effect chiefly of the licentiousness and insubordination caused by the weakness of the government.

circumstances from effecting, though they have attempted, much in the way of *direct* instruction, they still refer with confidence to their past proceedings, as an answer to Mr. Thorpe's call. And if the great bar to African civilization be, as he himself has admitted, the slave trade, then they flatter themselves that they have not only attempted, but *effected* much for Africa.

Mr. Thorpe seems to imagine, in defiance of the concurrent testimony of history, that the growth of civilization is something which should be visible in twenty-one months; for this was the entire period to which his personal observations extended. On the ground of this brief experience, during a time also when many of the Colonists had been induced, by an Act which he himself had framed, to abandon their farms and quit the Colony, he takes it upon him to affirm, in opposition to the testimony of almost every other individual who has known Sierra Leone, that *nothing* has been effected; nor even *attempted*, in civilization, either by the Sierra Leone Company, or the African Institution, or the servants of his Majesty. The Directors, however, are assisted by persons of the first respectability, who resided in the Colony for a number of years, that the statements of Mr. Thorpe in this respect also are happily unfounded; that the progress of civilization, though slow, has been sure and unremittingly progressive, not only among the settlers, but the surrounding natives; and that it would be impossible for any man who was conversant with the state of Sierra Leone in 1792 and 1793, not to be struck



with the very great and visible improvement which has taken place during the last twenty years.

Mr. Thorpe, however, could hardly have been ignorant, that in addition to any attempts which have been made by the African Institution in the work of direct instruction,—attempts necessarily limited, as has been already observed, by the fundamental rule which prevented the employment of Missionaries, and by the low state of its funds,—much has been attempted and even effected in this way by other societies, and particularly by the Church Missionary Society for Missions to Africa and the East. Of this Society, the very persons whom Mr. Thorpe most vehemently attacks as unfriendly to the interests of Africa, namely, the late chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, Mr. H. Thornton, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Maçaulay, it appears, were among the founders; and from its institution in 1800, they have also been among its most strenuous supporters, as well as active managers: besides whom, twelve noblemen and gentlemen are managers alike of both institutions. These persons, as well as the Directors generally, have all along known that great exertions were making, even in that department of instruction which Mr. Thorpe alleges to have been so fatally neglected. And it will be satisfactory to the Meeting to learn, that the Church Missionary Society has not only been engaged for the last ten years in extending the blessings of Christian education to numbers of African youth, but that it has undertaken the charge of forming schools for the whole of the youth of the negro popu-

lation at Sierra Leone who have been rescued from the condemned slave ships, and has actually sent out teachers of both sexes with that view\*. As the income of this Society, in the last year, was about 12,000*l.*, and in the present, about 16,000*l.*, the Directors have no doubt that the expectations it has raised on this subject will be fully answered.

But this is by no means all that is actually going forward in the way of instruction at Sierra Leone. It is true, that during a great proportion of the twenty-one months that Mr. Thorpe resided at Sierra Leone, the voluntary exile of many of the settlers, caused by his own Act, had lessened the number both of the teachers and scholars, and materially interfered with the progress of instruction; and this effect, after his manner, he attributes to the African Institution. But the Directors have now before them a letter from one of the schoolmasters, dated in 1810, stating, that he had then under his care about one hundred boys; besides whom, the Missionary Nylander, and three other teachers (male and female) on the establishment, are stated to have had each from thirty to fifty scholars. There were, besides these, two small schools supported by the settlers themselves. In the succeeding year, the Methodist Missionaries opened a school on the new British system, for the purpose chiefly of teaching the captured Negroes. An eye-witness, speaking of this circumstance, observes; "Many of these poor people are very anxious for instruction; and it

\* Appendix, F.

was with no small pleasure I have seen the Methodist chapel filled with them in the evening, and several of the young people among the settlers officiating as schoolmasters and mistresses, on the new system; but all this was done without any countenance from Mr. Thorpe, who, on the contrary, acted rather the part of a persecutor of these Missionaries."

The interruption given to education by the Militia Act, has been already mentioned. Subsequently to the period of Mr. Thorpe's quitting the Colony, the state of the schools, from the best information which the Directors have been able to obtain, and on which they entirely rely, was as follows:—a school under the superintendence of Mr. and Mrs. Butcher, Missionaries, contained about one hundred and forty captured girls, and about thirty children of the Colonists. Two of the Methodist Missionaries, aided by another person, were engaged in keeping a school of boys on the new plan. A Sunday-school was established in the building used as a church, under the management of a Nova-Scotian named Jordan, who is stated to have carried it on with zeal, and to have had more scholars than he could well attend to. One of the soldiers of the Royal African corps, of the name of Sima, conducted a boys' school, at which the African drummers and soldiers, and the captured boys who were learning trades, attended, to the number of about sixty. This man is reported to pay great attention to the school under his charge, and to do much justice to his pupils: he had also some private scholars. Besides these schools, there was a private school

for girls in the Colony, kept by a person of the name of Duncan.

The above sketch refers to the years 1818 and 1814.

Since that time, however, an European schoolmaster, and two European schoolmistresses, and three African youths, prepared by several years' instruction in this country to act as teachers on the new system, have been sent out to Sierra Leone by the Directors. Several additional teachers have also been sent, and more are about to be sent, by the Church Missionary Society.

20. At p. 60, Mr. Thorpe tauntingly asks, why the Institution "did not unremittingly labour to have the slave trade pronounced a violation of the law of nature and nations by the European Powers assembled in Congress?"—And did it not do so? By whom, then, was the public attention awakened and kept alive to this subject? At whose instance were the Addresses in both Houses of Parliament in favour of the universal abolition of the slave trade moved? By whom was the example first set, of calling meetings to petition the legislature on that point, and the whole nation implored to come forward as one man, in behalf of injured Africa? By whom was the unavoidable expense attending this universal call on the national feeling, chiefly borne? To these questions the only reply which can be made, is the African Institution?

If Mr. Thorpe is ignorant of its exertions in this cause, or if, knowing them, he nevertheless wishes to discredit them with such persons as he may hope to

influence by the boldness of his untrue insinuations; his statements can have no effect on his Majesty's Ministers, who well know with what persevering importunity the wishes of the Institution have been urged on this point. Even in the last year, during which the Directors rejoice in contemplating the progress that has been made in this great cause, through the exertions of those Ministers, there has been a constant communication of suggestions and information, on the part either of the Board, or of some of the Directors under its sanction, both to the Duke of Wellington and to Lord Castlereagh, for the purpose of supplying those distinguished characters with the materials on which to found their representations.—Mr. Thorpe hopes that Lord Castlereagh “will cease to communicate privately with these pilferers of his popularity.” Lord Castlereagh is well entitled to the thanks of his country, and of the world, for his able, persevering, and successful efforts at the Congress in this cause; but Lord Castlereagh himself will not scruple to admit that these efforts have been in no small degree assisted by communications received from members of this Board.

23. Mr. Thorpe's concluding charge is thus expressed:—“I have *no time* for condensation; not even for sufficient correction. All I could do privately I have done, but my exertions were vain. I wrote to you from Africa; I spoke to you here; *Mr. Allen persuaded you to call me before a Committee of the African Institution, which I found to be made up of select friends of the party, and a few disinterested and amiable, but timid men.* I expected nothing,

and was not disappointed. They considered it would be dangerous to impeach the management, curtail the patronage, or contract the mercantile interest, of an old directing servant and friend.

"You then importuned me, until I promised to make written remarks on your Reports, which I assured you were 'delusive and fallacious from beginning to end.' I complied with your request, and satisfied you I said nothing that I would not write; or that I would write nothing I could not prove; for I concluded my introduction thus: 'I only request, in return for the trouble I have taken, that if I have said or written any thing on which a doubt can hang, that I may be called on for further proof, and it shall be immediately given.' Yet in private it was whispered there was no proof of what I had said or written though I offered it; and though I caused to be brought before you three of the oldest, most intelligent, most respectable, and most independent gentlemen you yourselves ever sent to the Colony; for Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Vanneck, and Mr. Nicol were all servants to the Sierra Leone Company, and afterwards held considerable offices under the Crown. But every thing beneficial to Sierra Leone, Africa, or England, to support your own professions or promises, to expose the defalcation of funds, or the aggrandizement of individuals, was to be prohibited: every sacrifice was to be made to concealment; no inquiry to be instituted; no attention paid to any representation; lest exposure should tear the pillars from under the Temple of Promise, and the fame of the very elders perish in the ruins."

Now the fact is, that Mr. Thorpe had made almost all the charges contained in his pamphlet, considerably more than a year ago, viz. in December 1813, although he now complains of having no time for condensation or correction. He admits, however that a Committee of the African Institution was appointed to inquire into these charges, but he endeavours to discredit its labours. The Committee consisted of Mr. Brougham, Chairman; Lord Calthorpe; Mr. Allen; Mr. Babington; Mr. Clarkson; Mr. Forster; Mr. G. Harrison; Mr. Thomas Harrison; Mr. Macaulay; Mr. Stephen; Mr. H. Thornton; Mr. Whishaw; and Mr. Wilberforce. They sat for about twenty-two days, and from four to five hours each day, and prosecuted the inquiry with the utmost diligence and attention. They examined Mr. Thorpe himself. They examined also Messrs. Hamilton, Vameck, and Nicol, the three gentlemen of whom he speaks as highly respectable and intelligent; and the result was the falsification of the charges of Mr. Thorpe, and a report in unison with that which is now made.

Mr. Thorpe intimates in his pamphlet the probability of his being suddenly ordered back to Africa, as the reason for its appearing at the very critical moment, for the general interests of the Abolition-question, in which he thought proper to publish it. This intimation is evidently intended as an answer by anticipation to the charge to which he had exposed himself of being indifferent, or even hostile to the cause of Africa. He knew, however, at the time of the publication, that his return to Sierra Leone had been countermanded by Government; and he did

knew, that negotiations were actually pending with foreign Governments on the subject of the slave trade, to which his pamphlet was calculated, in proportion to the credit it might receive, to give an unfavourable turn. It was fortunately, however, too late, by two or three weeks, to produce any effect on the measures of Congress. Its deliberations on that subject had happily closed before Mr. Thorpe's pamphlet could reach Vienna; and recent events have deprived it of all power to retard the progress of Abolition in France.

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It now only remains to observe, that in addition to the numerous and unfounded charges which have been already refuted as affecting the Sierra Leone Company and the African Institution, two most respectable members of each have been selected as particular objects of Mr. Thorpe's animadversions.

The charges brought against Mr. Wilberforce are too vague to be met, and too weak, as well as groundless, to require a serious refutation\*.

There is only one observation upon the sentiments

\* Mr. Thorpe, for instance, asserts, at p. 43, that Mr. Clarkson "was certainly engaged in this great cause twenty years before he enlisted Mr. Wilberforce under his banners;" when it is known to every one acquainted with the rise and progress of the Abolition cause, that Mr. Clarkson began his honourable career in it, by the publication of an *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the human Species*, in 1785, and that Mr. Wilberforce, after much previous preparation, introduced the subject to the notice of the Legislature, in an admirable speech, in the Session of 1787-1788.



ascribed to this gentleman which can be at all worthy of notice. Mr. Thorpe quotes a passage from the "Letter to Prince Talleyrand;" and, with his usual boldness of misrepresentation, gives it as an avowal, that "it is not slavery, but the slave trade, that Mr. Wilberforce dislikes." This interpretation is put upon a passage in which that gentleman labours to clear up the mistake, still prevalent on the Continent, of confounding the Abolition of the slave trade, with the immediate emancipation of the Slaves in the Colonies. Mr. Wilberforce, in common with all the most distinguished advocates of the Abolition, is anxious to shew, that a mere cessation of the importation of Slaves cannot occasion those dangers which might justly be apprehended from the sudden emancipation of men, most of whom must be destitute of those habits which are necessary for enabling them to act with propriety as freemen; and from this argument, Mr. Thorpe, with a remarkable disregard of candour, draws the conclusion, that Mr. Wilberforce does not look on the continuance of slavery as an evil deserving of any attention.

It is well known, that the friends of Abolition are the less inclined to recommend any hasty or violent measures for emancipation, because they are convinced, that if new importations of Slaves be *completely* and *effectually* prevented, this of itself must produce a material and progressive improvement in the condition of those already in the Colonies, so as to lead *in time* to their emancipation. Through a similar progress, the peasantry of our own country, and of the greater part of Europe, have risen from

the condition of serfs to that of free labourers, by means of a number of indulgences granted from time to time by the masters themselves, merely from a regard to their own interest. Experience taught them that it was better policy to bribe their Slaves to be industrious, than to attempt compulsion ; and from this motive one privilege has been conferred after another, till in the end all that distinguished the condition of a slave has been annihilated. The same causes will produce the same effects in the West Indies as in Europe ; and however slow this progress may be supposed to be, history demonstrates that it is sure and invariable,—for, along with the advancement of civilization, domestic slavery has disappeared in every country where it has not been kept alive, either by the practice of enslaving prisoners taken in war, or by the importation of Slaves from countries where that practice subsists.

These views have been so often explained to the public that no man of common information, and of a decent regard to truth, could have represented a line of conduct founded upon them as implying indifference to the continuance of negro slavery. But when we are told, in addition to this, that the conduct of Mr. Wilberforce has been uniformly directed by a base and mercenary project for raising tropical produce in Africa by means of Slaves, (and that in a settlement where by law no man can be detained in a state of slavery,) one cannot but feel the highest astonishment at the effrontery of the libeller.

With respect to Mr. Macaulay, the charges against him being mostly of a personal nature, and

founded on extracts of letters written by him in confidence, and which cannot be understood without a reference to their context, he has himself undertaken the refutation of those calumnies \*, for which reason only they are not noticed here.—There are, however, some points which seem rather to fall within the province of this Report. The assertion that he has obtained valuable advantages, both from the Sierra Leone Company and from the Institution, by his influence over their leaders; such as nearly a monopoly of the trade, great freight for his ships, and the whole controul of every thing attached to the Colony, as well as the arrangement of the offices and of persons to fill them, though easy to be refuted in the most satisfactory manner, the Directors think it unnecessary to do more than to meet with a direct and unqualified denial.

The charge of receiving a sum of 107*l*. is founded on the following circumstances :—

At the commencement of the African Institution, Mr. Macaulay, whose extensive acquaintance with the state and interests of the country in question, was well known to many of the parties then associating, was requested to do them the favour of acting as *pro tempore* Secretary. Having kindly undertaken the office, and executed it most ably and zealously for four years, he solicited to be released from a burthen which daily became more inconvenient; but at the urgent instances of the Directors, reluc-

\* See "A Letter to his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, President of the African Institution, from Zachary Macaulay, Esq." printed for Hatchard, 190, Piccadilly, and Richardson, Cornhill.

tantly consented to hold it for yet a short time, when, at the next anniversary of the Society, the present respectable Secretary having generously consented to relieve him, Mr. Macaulay's resignation was accepted. Such, however, was the opinion of a general meeting, more than usually numerous, that a mere vote of thanks, in the most respectful terms, was deemed wholly insufficient to express their obligation; and, in opposition to his repeated remonstrances, he was requested to accept a piece of plate, of 100 guineas value, as an inadequate testimony of their gratitude for the highly valuable services which he had gratuitously rendered to the Institution for five years. Of these particulars, known to almost every member of the association, and published to the world, Mr. Thorpe could scarcely have been ignorant at the very moment when, in an address to the public, he deliberately chose to stigmatize the transaction as "profuse" and "eleemosinary." "Eleemosinary," it is supposed, because Mr. Macaulay had uniformly and strenuously refused every thing like remuneration, even in the shape of compliment;—and "profuse," because that compliment which was at last forced upon him, did not cost one-eighth of what he had actually saved to the Society by the service he had performed. Can Mr. Thorpe deny one word of this statement? If not, will he, as a judge, decide what epithets are due to the author of such a misrepresentation?

The fact respecting the premium paid to Mr. Macaulay, on the importation of rice, was precisely as follows :—

A Resolution had been made by the Directors, in the year 1808, that a premium of a piece of plate, of the value of 50 guineas, or the same sum in money, should be given to the person who should *first* import into this country the largest quantity, not less than 10 tons of white rice, the produce of the Western Coast of Africa, in a clean marketable state. The object was obviously to encourage the cultivation of that article for sale. In 1813, the commercial house of Messrs. Macaulay & Co. claimed the premium for having imported not *ten*, but nearly 100 tons of such rice. They preferred and received the honorary reward; but Mr. Thorpe has omitted to inform the public, that the premium was no sooner awarded, than the whole amount of it was immediately paid in by Messrs. Macaulay & Co. as a Donation to the funds of the Institution.

The Directors feel, that they should be deficient in justice to a most able, meritorious, and indefatigable member of the Institution, and friend to the common cause in which they are engaged, if they were not to express, in the most positive terms, the indignant sense which they entertain of the virulent, though fruitless, endeavours which have been made to sully his high and well-earned reputation, and to diminish the usefulness of his exertions for the interests of humanity.

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The Directors have now completed their laborious comment on a publication which they think they have shewn to be entitled to little respect from any

intrinsic merit, and on which nothing but the judicial character of the author could have bestowed sufficient importance to have called for any reply.— They therefore regret, that a circumstance merely adventitious should have created an opinion in some respectable friends, of the expediency of entering into such length of detail as must appear tedious to all who are not deeply interested in the subject. But, in the conclusion, they console themselves with the confident persuasion, that this exposition of the series of proceedings respecting Africa will not only set the question at rest with almost all those persons whose opinion is worthy of regard, but will have the farther good consequence of increasing the public attention to their great and interesting cause, and of enabling them to prosecute their course with more vigour and effect.

To some they may seem to have spent too much time in a gratuitous and unnecessary defence of the Sierra Leone Company; but the allegations against that respectable and disinterested body, are so mingled and confounded, probably on purpose, with the attack on the African Institution, and on some gentlemen who have belonged to both, that it was not only difficult to separate them, but neither could the Directors wish, merely for the sake of shortening their own task, to permit so many calumnies to pass unnoticed.

For any severity of expression towards Mr. Thorpe, should his accusations or his proofs appear too frivolous to provoke it, the justification may fairly be found in the suppliant malignity of the accuser;—

for it must not be forgotten, that he has not confined his charges to inadvertence, or injudicious management, but has dared either openly to assert, or covertly to insinuate, that in the ostensible pursuit of a magnificent national object, its great patron, Mr. Wilberforce, has been self-interested and hypocritical;—that the Managers of the Sierra Leone Company were dishonest and corrupt;—that power, patronage, and emolument, in some way or other, were the real ends which these persons, whether in the Sierra Leone Company or in the African Institution, have all along pursued;—and that to the attainment of them they have wilfully sacrificed the interests of their constituents, the expectations of the public, the national honour, and the happiness of Africa.

The Directors are perfectly aware, that so preposterous a charge, against persons whose reputation is far above the reach of such an assailant, could no otherwise acquire currency, for one instant, but from the general and proper presumption in favour of the veracity and accuracy to be looked for in one holding the office of a Judge; and the conviction, that no person of honour and good sense would hazard such assertions on light grounds.

But surely, when accusations so calumnious are preferred against men of unimpeached reputation, it is not the aggravation of their being senseless as well as false, which should enable their authors to find shelter in contempt from just and deserved censure.

One other point only remains to be noticed.—In his last publication, Mr. Thorpe loudly calls

for "open, fair, and full enquiry."—This is specious, and may answer the end he probably has in view, of keeping himself some little time longer afloat before the public. But let it be for a moment examined.

A person thinks fit to publish a virulent invective **AT LEAST**, against the proceedings and the characters of many respectable men. Contradicted and refuted, he demands a public inquiry. Who Mr. Thorpe is, to claim all this attention from the world, is a question more easily asked than satisfactorily answered.

But into whose conduct would he inquire? If into that of the Sierra Leone Company, a short and obvious reply has been already given. Previous to the dissolution of that Society's connection with the Colony, above seven years ago, four parliamentary investigations of its affairs had taken place, the results of which are sufficient to shield its memory from his aspersions. It may also be doubted whether the members of the Legislature have not sufficient occupation, without recommencing their labours merely because Mr. Thorpe is dissatisfied.

Does he quarrel with the conduct of the subsequent Governors of the Colony? Those gentlemen held their appointments successively from the Crown, and were immediately accountable to its Ministers, who do not seem to have betrayed so total an inattention to the behaviour either of their Governors or their *Judges* there, as to warrant Parliament in taking such an investigation out of their hands; and who else has a right to do it?



The Directors of the African Institution remain, therefore, the only objects ; who, not having ever received, or even solicited, either powers or aids from the Legislature, are not, in the usual course of affairs, accountable to it. By their own constituents, the Subscribers who elect them, they are at all times liable to be questioned, and have ever cheerfully afforded to them every information.

And to these Directors Mr. Thorpe having made complaints, a Committee of Inquiry was instituted; whose proceedings have been already mentioned ; and the result not answering his purposes any better than the Reports of the House of Commons, his judgment and his temper have led him to denounce the members of that Committee as partial or incapable. But does this afford the least presumption that they deserve the imputation?

To conclude : the Directors of the African Institution really do not acknowledge any responsibility to Mr. Thorpe. They are not aware that he has acquired a right of demanding a scrutiny into their concerns, merely by having had the effrontery to launch against them a virulent and slanderous invective, which they have thought fit to repel ; nor are they disposed to give him a consequence, to which no other circumstance entitles him, by taking the slightest notice of any thing which he may in future think it for his amusement or his interest to utter to the world,

# APPENDIX.

## A.

### GENERAL VIEW OF THE EXPENDITURE OF THE SIERRA LEONE COMPANY.

1. *Estimate of the Company's Expenditure during the first three Years of the Colony; namely, from January 1792, to December 1794\*.*

IN Provisions granted by the Company to the Nova-Scotians, about .....	L.20,000	0	0
IN providing Shipping, for the temporary Accommodation of the Colonists, and other shipping Expenses, about .....	30,000	0	0
IN Buildings, about .....	25,000	0	0
IN laying out Lands, and in Cultivation, about .....	5,000	0	0
Value of the Goods consumed in the Company's Store Ship, which was accidentally burnt†, about .....	15,000	0	0
Salaries of Servants, Expense of Passage, &c. ....	12,500	0	0
Expense of Home Establishment, Act of Incorporation, &c., about .....	4,000	0	0
	<u>L.111,500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

This amount is exclusive of the loss caused by the destruction of the Colony by the French, estimated at upwards of 50,000*l*.

\* When Freetown was captured by the French, towards the close of 1794, all the colonial books of account were consumed in the general conflagration of the Company's buildings. It was not possible, therefore, to do more than to form an estimate of the previous expense, as nearly as the data which the Directors possessed enabled them to do.

† The value of the ship is included in the second item.

**2. Abstract of the Company's Expenditure, between the 1st of January 1795, and the 31st December 1799, being five Years.**

Salaries of Civil Servants.....	L.14,508	4	3
Department of Instruction .....	3,442	7	7
Medical Department .....	2,472	3	5
Cultivation, including Premiums, and the Expense of an Expedition to procure Plants, Seeds, &c.....	3,808	8	6
Contingent Expenses of all kinds, including Colonial Defence, the Expense attending Shipping for the Accommodation of the Colony after its Destruction by the French, Expense of Servants' Passages to and from the Colony, the Loss on Buildings, &c. &c.	10,501	11	8
Expense of Home Establishment; including House Rent, Clerks, Office Expenses, &c....	3,039	3	0
	<u>L.37,771</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>5</u>

This amount is exclusive of all commercial charges and commercial losses, captures of ships, &c. Neither does it include the actual value of the various buildings erected in the Colony at the Company's expense during the above period.

**3. Abstract of the Company's Expenditure from the 1st Jan, 1800, to the 31st Dec. 1807, being eight Years.**

Salaries to Servants of the Company abroad, including Expense of their Passages to and from the Colony .....	L.34,106	13	4
Expense attending the obtaining of a Charter of Justice .....	1,393	5	2
Expense attending the Department of Instruction in Africa and England (exclusive of the Salaries of Teachers at Sierra Leone) .....	4,193	12	3

Brought forward ...	L.39,698	10	9
Expense of Medical Department, exclusive of Salaries .....	1,570	18	0
Expense attending Cultivation, Premiums to Settlers, &c., exclusive of Salaries.....	2,027	16	11
Expense attending the Erection of Fortifications, and other Public Buildings; Ordnance, and Ordnance Stores; the Payment of a Military Force formed of the Settlers, for Colonial Defence: the Charges of the War with the Natives, &c. &c. ....	67,769	3	11
Contingent Expenses, including House-rent, Stationary, Expense of Police and Courts of Justice, Presents to Native Chiefs, and a Variety of Miscellaneous Expenses, not reducible to any distinct Head .....	13,281	12	4
Salaries to Servants in England .....	5,609	0	0
	<u>L.129,951</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>

The above abstract is exclusive of commercial losses, particularly from capture by the enemy, which were considerable, and commercial salaries.

Of the above amount, there was received from Government 96,519*l.* 8*s.*

## B.

EXTRACT ON THE SUBJECT OF THE JOURNEY TO TEEMBOO OF MESSRS. WATT AND WINTERBOTTOM, FROM THE APPENDIX TO THE ACCOUNT OF MR. PARK'S LAST MISSION TO AFRICA.

With reference to the internal geography of Africa, the writer may take this opportunity of observing, that next to the African Association, to whom we are indebted for almost all

the authentic information which we possess upon this subject, considerable praise is due to the Sierra Leone Company, under whose auspices, during the time they were in possession of that Colony, several important journeys into the interior were judiciously undertaken, and successfully executed. Among these may be mentioned, an expedition, in 1794, by Mr. Watt and Mr. Winterbottom, being a land journey of near five hundred miles, in going and returning by different routes to Laby and Teemboo: both of them considerable towns, and the latter the capital of the Foulah country. Tombuctoo appeared, from the inquiries made by the travellers, to be well known at both those places, and the communication with that city from Laby, though it was spoken of as a journey of four moons, was represented to be open, and they were furnished with many particulars of the route. Shortly afterwards, in consequence perhaps of this information, a project was formed at Sierra Leone, of sending out a Mission to Tombuctoo: but Mr. Watt, who was to have undertaken the journey, died, and the invasion of the Colony by the French in September 1794, together with the destruction which followed, seems to have put a stop to expeditions of this nature.

The Editor has been favoured by Mr. Macaulay, late Secretary of the Sierra Leone Company, and formerly Governor of the Colony, with a sight of the Journals of the expedition to Teemboo, as well as of some other Missions from Sierra Leone, of inferior importance. They do great credit to the writers, (especially the Journal to Teemboo), and contain many valuable and interesting particulars, several of which have been given to the public in the Reports of the Sierra Leone Company, and in Dr. Winterbottom's judicious account of the native Africans in the neighbourhood of that Colony. But there is still room for a compilation or selection from these journals, which, if well executed, would be an instructive and interesting publication.—*Last Journal of Mr. Mungo Park.* App. p. cviii.

## C.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COURT OF DIRECTORS OF THE SIERRA LEONE COMPANY, TO GOVERNOR THOMPSON, DATED 20th OCT. 1808.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th July, which treats exclusively of the violation of the principles of our Institution by our chief servants abroad, and more especially by our late Governor, Mr. Ludlam, through the countenance which he gave to the introduction of the system of indented servants, in the case of certain Slaves taken in the month of March last, by Captain Parker, in ships supposed to be American; for each of which Slaves, Mr. Ludlam permitted those who received them to give twenty dollars to the captors.

We have in the first place to observe, that the transaction in question took place subsequently to the transfer of the Colony to the Crown, and therefore under the authority not of the Sierra Leone Company, but of the King's Government, and without our privity or instructions. Indeed, the previous transfer of the Colony had deprived the Company of all right to controul the conduct of those who were appointed to govern it. We cannot, therefore, help expressing our surprize that you should consider us a party implicated in the transaction which is the object of your animadversion, and still more, that you should begin your letter by representing the Company as having, through that very transaction, "by means of their agents, turned slave-traders themselves."

The intelligence contained in your letter, that slavery has always existed in the Colony of Sierra Leone, is certainly new to us. We are bound, however, to question the accuracy of information so contrary to the tenor of that which we have been accustomed to receive, and implying so uniform an indis-

position in our Governors to execute the laws provided for this very object, unless we receive more decisive proof of its truth than is implied by your dispatch.

This is, in fact, all that we are called upon to say in reply to your letter, the general subject of which it is for his Majesty's Ministers to discuss. We think it right, however, to remark, that we feel the force of many of your objections to the principle of authorizing indented servants; but it is obvious that they are in no degree applicable to our proceedings, however they may apply to the Legislature, and to the members of his Majesty's Privy Council, who have sanctioned that principle, and in conformity to whose intentions Mr. Ludlam appears to have acted, in the disposal of the Africans taken by Capt. Parker.

Had these Africans been regularly condemned as prize, we conceive that Mr. Ludlam would not only have been authorized, but required, to enlist them into his Majesty's service, or to bind them apprentices agreeably to the provisions of the Abolition Act, and of the Order in Council founded upon it. Whether the principle adopted in that Act and in the Order in Council be right, is another question. In the present case, indeed, the Slaves had not been condemned. This, doubtless, forms a material consideration in discussing the *legality* of the transaction. Nevertheless, it appears to us perfectly unjust to censure Mr. Ludlam as the restorer of the slave trade, merely because he applied the general directions of the Abolition Act to a difficult and unforeseen case, respecting which he had received no instructions. The words of the Act of Parliament are these: "Provided always that it shall be lawful for his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, and such officers civil and military as shall by any general or special order of the King in Council be from time to time appointed and empowered to receive, protect, and provide for such natives of Africa as shall be so condemned either to enter and enlist the same, or any of them, into his Majesty's land or sea-service, as soldiers, seamen, or marines, or to bind the same, or any of them, whether of full age or not, as apprentices, for any term not exceeding fourteen years, to such person or persons,

in such place or places, and upon such terms and conditions, and subject to such regulations as to his Majesty shall seem meet, and as shall by any general or special Order of his Majesty in Council, be in that behalf directed and appointed, and any indenture of apprenticeship duly made and executed by any person or persons to be for that purpose appointed, by any such Order in Council, for any term not exceeding fourteen years, shall be of the same force and effect as if the party thereby bound as an apprentice had himself or herself, when of full age, upon good consideration, duly executed the same, and every such native of Africa who shall be so enlisted, or entered as aforesaid, into and of his Majesty's land or sea forces, as a soldier, seaman, or marine, shall be considered, treated, and dealt with in all respects as if he had voluntarily so enlisted or entered himself."

We certainly think that Mr. Ludlam was to blame in allowing twenty dollars to be paid by the persons taking the Africans, to the persons who captured them; and we expressed this opinion on our first hearing of the transaction. The difficulties, however, which must have embarrassed Mr. Ludlam at the moment, in deciding on a case which was wholly unprecedented, certainly entitle his conduct to the most indulgent consideration; nor can we agree that the transaction ought to be confounded with that of a sale of Slaves. The sum thus paid in the way of premium of apprenticeship, ought, as we conceive, under the new circumstances which have arisen, to be recovered from the captors, and restored to the Colonists who paid it, and in any case, it seems hard that they should lose it, and be also deprived of the services of their apprentices. The Colonists acted under the authority and guarantee of the existing Governor, and in a case which must have seemed to them to be within his province; and we fear that some dissatisfaction may arise in their minds, as well as some prejudice be done to the general character of the Sierra Leone Government, if the proclamation annulling the whole transaction shall remain unaccompanied by any intimation of an intention to take measures for restoring to them the sum in question.



D.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE  
OF THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION, FROM THE MONTH OF  
MARCH, 1807, TO THE 31st DECEMBER, 1814.

The whole Receipts have amounted, as is stated in the Report, to 9850*l*. The whole expenditure has been 8637*l*. 5*s*. 3*d*. viz:—

Collector's Commission on the Subscriptions.....	<i>£</i> . 320	18	0
Salaries of Clerks.....	650	0	0
Porterage, Postage, Carriage of Reports, hiring, Rooms for Meetings, Rent of Office, Furniture, Books, and Maps, and various incidental Expenses .....	1314	2	0
Advertisements in the Newspapers, and insertions containing Information relative to the Slave Trade, &c....	237	10	0
Printing Reports of the Institution, Summaries, Tracts, and Addresses, Papers for Distribution in Navy, Summonses, &c. &c. ....	1126	7	7
Translations of Tracts, into Foreign Languages, and printing and circulating the same; also, the aiding of Works adapted to, the West Indies, &c. ....	650	9	6
Expense attending Captain Paul Cuffee's Journey to London; rescuing a Free Man of Colour from Slavery, and sending Native Africans, back to their own Country.....	202	5	5
Education of African Youths for Schoolmasters, their Maintenance and Passage-Money; Salary of Teachers and their Out-fit, School-books, &c. ....	728	4	10
Expense of procuring and transmitting various Seeds and Plants and Machinery to Sierra Leone.....	499	16	7

Brought forward... L. 5638 0 5

Expense of Law Proceedings instituted against Persons engaged in the Slave Trade .....	768	2	10
Expense of a Piece of Plate, Premiums, &c.....	265	2	0
Expense attending the Petitions presented to Par- liament on the Slave Trade in 1814 .....	1865	0	0
	<u>L. 6527</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>

## E.

Colony of Sierra Leone, Sept. 1, 1812.

His Excellency Charles William Maxwell, Governor in Chief  
of Sierra Leone, Goree, and Senegal, &c. &c. &c.

*Dr. to James Biggs,*

For Diplomatic Services rendered to his Majesty for the  
Purpose of carrying into Effect the 51st Geo. III. c. 23.  
enacted for the Abolition of the Slave Trade:

March, 1812.

To writing four Letters to Mr. William Skelton, to  
persuade him to come from the Soosoo Country  
to the Colony of Sierra Leone, to renounce the  
Slave Trade, and to become an Evidence for  
the Crown against the Slave Traders of the Rio  
Pongas .....

To writing two Letters to Benjamin Curtis, for the  
same purpose .....

To writing to Mr. Samuel Perry, for the same  
purpose .....

To writing one Letter, for the same purpose, to  
Mr. Stiles, E. Lighthouse .....

To writing one Letter to the Rev. Melachias  
Renner, in order to prevail on him to co-operate .....

- in the Views of his Excellency Governor Maxwell, in the Suppression of the Slave Trade.....
- To writing one Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wenzel, for the same purpose .....
- To writing one Letter to Wm. Salter Sanders, Esq. Commander of his Majesty's Colonial Schooner, Princess Charlotte, advising his Conduct towards the Inhabitants of the Rio Pongas.....
- To writing one Letter to Mrs. Hind, persuading her to give Information relative to British Subjects whom she might know to continue in the Slave Trade .....
- To writing a Letter of Instruction to Wm. Salter Sanders, Esq. respecting Samo's Writing-desks at the Isles de Los and the Rio Pongas .....
- To writing one Letter to Mr. Malcolm Brodie, to prevail on him to become a Crown Evidence against the Slave Traders .....
- To writing one Letter to R. W. Cunningham, for the same purpose.....
- To writing to Mr. John Holman, for the same purpose .....
- To communicating, in person, his Excellency Governor Maxwell's Message to King Munga Katty, and other Chiefs of the Soosoo Nation..
- To explaining to the above Chiefs, and all the Slave Traders in the Rio Pongas, the British Acts of Parliament relative to the Slave Trade.....
- To effectually persuading six of the chief Slave Traders to come to the Colony of Sierra Leone, to renounce the Slave Trade, and appear as Evidence for the Crown of Great Britain.....

N.B. In the execution of the whole of the above arduous duty, which lasted thirteen days, from first to last, Mr. Biggs was constantly exposed to the violence and stratagem of the natives of the Soosoo country; encouraged by some of the Whites. Mr. Biggs had to travel by sea and land to accomplish the instruc-

tions of his Excellency Governor Maxwell; and though the task was difficult and eminently dangerous, in an ill state of health, and a dreadful climate, Mr. Biggs completely effected the purpose of the Governor, and brought to conviction the "father of the Slave Trade," who, without these exertions, must inevitably have escaped with impunity, and thus great detriment would have been done to his Majesty's benevolent intentions towards the enslaved inhabitants of Africa.

## F.

### EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

There is one very important part of the Society's plans on which your Committee beg permission to dwell. It is the establishment of Christian Institutions, under the protection of British authority, in the most favourable stations for diffusing the light of truth among the heathen. In these Institutions, it is proposed that provision shall be made for training up the native youth in the knowledge of agriculture and the simple arts, and in qualifying some of them to become teachers of their countrymen, and others, if it shall please God, preachers of the Gospel. These Institutions will serve as points of support to the exertions of the Society in their respective quarters: they may be rendered the asylums of its widows and orphans; and they will become, in various ways, a source of beneficent influence over the surrounding tribes. Such an institution is about to be established within the Colony of Sierra Leone. The Society has already four settlements on that coast, in which about two hundred native children receive Christian instruc-

tion. These settlements are subject to the caprice of the natives. But the Institution in question will be secure under the protection of the Colonial Government of Sierra Leone. His Majesty's Ministers have on this, as on every other occasion, manifested the utmost readiness to assist the designs of the Society, and to extend the moral and religious influence of this country.

It is proposed to receive into this Institution the multitudes of African children who are liberated from smuggling slave vessels. Any benevolent person who gives five pounds per annum may have the honour to support and educate one such child, and may affix to the child any name he pleases. The Committee are happy to report, that they have received nearly one hundred such names, and that the sum of about five hundred pounds is annually paid to the Society's fund for this object.

There has been of late a great accession to the Colony, of Africans of different tribes and languages, of whose moral and religious state no proper care has yet been taken. Of these, about 1000 are supposed to be children. A very laudable regard has been paid to education in the Colony, and exertions are now making in this respect; but the rapid increase of the number of these destitute children, by the liberation of them from slave smugglers, and the large increase which may yet be expected from the same source, demand more energetic and systematic efforts to rescue them from ignorance, and to train them up in the knowledge of Christianity, and of such occupations as may benefit themselves and their country.

On whom does this office of Christian charity so naturally devolve, as on the Church Missionary Society?

The efforts of the Society in Africa are wholly directed to the civilizing and evangelizing of the natives. A greater number of these natives, and of various tongues, are brought together in Sierra Leone than in any other place within the reach of the Society, and may be instructed there with more security than elsewhere.

As the Society's establishments increase in Africa, Sierra Leone will become more necessary as a point of support.

An asylum will be required for them, which may be prepared in the Colony with much greater advantage than in England.

Children received under the Society's care in the Colony, and brought up in Christian principles, would add rapidly to the moral influence of the Colony on the natives; and would become, under the Divine blessing, the means of extensively diffusing civilization and Christianity. They should all receive a good English education. Some of them should, at a suitable age, be apprenticed among the respectable Colonists to useful trades, or placed in service: others should be brought up, within the precincts of the Institution, in a thorough knowledge of the gardening and agriculture adapted to their country; while the most serious and promising youths should receive such farther education as may prepare them for being sent into the interior as schoolmasters, catechists, and ministers. Such as are likely to settle in the interior should be well instructed in the respective languages, by natives employed for that purpose. They might here receive, under proper teachers, such instruction in Arabic as might render them successful opponents of the Mahometans, and might place them as an effectual barrier to the inroads which they have long made on the natives. Every thing is to be conducted with a view to render them, under the Divine blessing, the best friends and enlighteners of their country.

A grant of land having been made to the Society by the Colonial Government, and the Society having requested a large addition to this grant, the way is prepared for an establishment adapted to carry these plans into execution. There a School-house should be erected on the national plan for 1200 or 1500 children, with a church or chapel for public worship, and suitable accommodations for the children, for a master and mistress, a missionary, and his family; and ultimately, provision should be made for decayed missionaries, and widows or orphans of missionaries, all in a plain and substantial style. On the Society's land, such of the liberated as are industrious and of good character, and willing to conform to the regulations of the Establishment, should be encouraged to settle; allotments of land be made to them for cultivation,

for their own support, and assistance should be given to them in erecting suitable habitations, on a plan previously determined.

*The CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE established and supported by the British Church Missionary Society, for the maintenance and education of African Children; and for the diffusion of Christianity and useful knowledge among the Natives,* would be an honour to Britain and to the Christian name, and an incalculable blessing to Africa.

Your Committee rejoice to add, that the proposal has been laid before his Majesty's Ministers, who have very liberally rendered the utmost assistance to this important design, and will place all the liberated Children under the Institution's care.

Your Committee have further to state, that the prayer of a Memorial presented by them to Government, on the erection of a Church at Sierra Leone, and the augmentation of the Chaplain's salary, accompanied by another Memorial on these subjects, from that zealous and unwearied friend of Africa, his Excellency Governor Maxwell, has been most readily granted.

In another part of the same Report it is stated, "Nearly 200 children are now maintained and educated in the different Settlements of the Society. At *Bashia*, Mr. Renner and Mr. Wilhelm are erecting a Church; and Mr. Wenzel is building another at *Canoffee*. At *Yongroo*, Mr. Nylander is enlarging his school, and proceeding vigorously in the preparation of elementary books, to teach the Bulloms their own tongue. The Gospel of St. Matthew will soon be forwarded to the Society to be printed. It will be the first book of the Word of God which has ever appeared in the native languages of this Coast. At *Gambier* (the new settlement of the Society), Mr. and Mrs. Klein are established with the prospect of a large school."

## G.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. THORPE TO GOVERNOR  
MAXWELL, DATED AUG. 10, 1812.

My dear Sir,

The letter you transmitted yesterday has induced this which I have long contemplated; but first let me assure you that I never did, nor never intended to apply for leave of absence. I stated in representing the situation of the Vice-Admiralty Court, that no benefit could arise to me, as it was not probable I could remain here longer than six months, and I mentioned to you that I had done so. Surely after remaining three years and a half, before I came out, and after the noise it made, it would be absurd to apply for leave of absence after remaining only six months at my station. Illness, or the public service, are the only things that could induce me to move; and the call of either I should obey without waiting for leave to depart. Now I can assure you, on my solemn word, that I never did intend leaving you, until we had agreed and settled every thing that could probably effect an abolition, and then, by going to the fountain head, lend labour to carry it into execution. I never had an idea of going home full of schemes, and delivering them as my own. I never intended to appear more than an useful instrument by which *you* had made much exertion. When Commodore Irby and Captain Scobell applied to me on the subject of returning to England, I told them I would not leave you while I could be more beneficial here than in England; I certainly have written to Mrs. Thorpe, that I conceived every thing done that I could effect here; that I thought I could do much in England, and therefore she might soon expect me home: but you know that when the frigates are going, the bad weather will probably be over here; therefore, if the Almighty should spare my life for a few months, he may



preserve my health till April, and after that I am convinced you would not advise my continuing here on any account. It only now remains, my dear Sir, for you to determine how it would be most beneficial to the cause we are embarked in for me to depart. You will reflect on the state you found this Colony in, and *the improvements you have made*: I can add nothing after trying the Maroons. Next consider largely how extensively we have crippled the slave trade. We have closely bound up the Portuguese; we have terrified the Americans, and put to flight the Spaniards.

My decisions are all known: any one can follow them up. I cannot add to what I have done. But look to the great plan you have in view, and the short time you may be allowed for its execution. England has laboured to abolish the slave trade. That trade has been the means of every comfort the African Chiefs possess: we never can destroy it, until we provide some means by which they can otherwise preserve those comforts. That can only be done by presents and trade. England has wished to explore Africa, to civilize the country, and benefit by her trade. That cannot be effected by individuals exploring, and trifling presents. We must make the Africans open the road, come to us, be gratified and enriched. This can only be done by placing confidence in powerful individuals on the coast; by depositing presents for the chiefs in the interior, and leaving articles for trading with them. England, by her anxiety to abolish the slave trade, has withdrawn capital, reduced her flourishing ships, and diminished her nursery for seamen; but by putting down commercial companies, and extending military forts along the coast, you re-establish all those advantages, you engage the whole trade, you have power to secure it, you set up for England a new and a most productive trade: her capital and her ships you set afloat again; you augment her mariners beyond her conception, and you open such a means of recruiting her army as she never dreamt of. You have already induced some Chiefs to place the inhabitants, not Black, under your jurisdiction: continue this; it will be easily accomplished: extend it from Cape de Verd to Cape Negro: two years will effect it; you will then have extended the juris-

diction and exterritorial right of Great Britain over a quarter of the world she never expected. You will exclude the rest of the world from the African trade; and you will exclude the Africans so completely from others, that they cannot choose but trade with you. Here there is an extension of territory, an augmentation of trade, and an increase of land and sea forces sufficient to maintain every possession, without sacrificing the lives of her European inhabitants. Now I have delivered to you hastily a little of what my mind contains on this extensive subject. Pursue it: immortal fame rests on it: Africa will be civilized, freed, and conciliated; her population will bless you; England will be enriched; unforced mines unthought of explored, and the lives of thousands of her best people preserved. Honour, glory, wealth, and blessings hang about it. Be assured it is within your reach; it is not a leap by which you can fall; it is presented to your hand, only grasp it strongly. Sully received lustre from being the friend of the great Henry. To receive the same from you is all that I require. Every power of my mind shall be given to you: I will support you in every act: I will attend you in every step. Wherever I shall go it shall be to forward those objects. Whenever I can promote them by my presence, I will return, I will sacrifice domestic comfort, professional emolument, climate, health, and perhaps life. All I wish you to consider now is, when it will be best to go to England. If I do not go till April, we lose a year; if I get to Ministers by Christmas, our plans may be carried instantly. Believe me, in truth, I would rather go in April, on account of my health; but the time may go by. Consolidate your thoughts, put your mind on paper, and see if it will not be better to lay them before Government instantly. I think I could carry every thing into effect, and return after the next rains. It is a great cause; it is a great subject; consider it well, and I will be the instrument of carrying into effect what will be freedom to Africa, and prosperity to England.

Ever yours, with the truest esteem,

(Signed) ROBERT THORPE.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. THORPE TO GOVERNOR  
MAXWELL, DATED 21st DEC. 1812.

I think, my dear Sir, the conviction of those two fellows\* for perjury, will be of very great service; it will purify the testimony given in the Vice-Admiralty Court, and help to terrify those fellows from coming to the Court.

The grand jury did not find the bill against Samo †. I hear it appeared that Miller took those boys away without Samo's knowledge, but do not think it probable he did so, without giving any remuneration. However the truth may be, it is best as it is.

There is one convicted of larceny, and one for an attempt to carry off a boy from Fora Bay ‡; both those men, I think *would make soldiers*, and Nash Baily appears so incorrigible, that he cannot be suffered to remain: *he is just fitted for a soldier.*"

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. THORPE TO GOVERNOR  
MAXWELL, DATED FEB. 23, 1812.

My dear Sir,

The loveable inhabitants of this place having determined that I must go to Lisbon in Mr. Becket's brig, I hasten to assure you, that if I had, or could determine on going, you should be the first acquainted with it; but shortly after the receipt of Mr. Peel's letter, I informed Lord Bathurst that it would not be in my power to remain after March. At the same time, if, after hearing what I had to relate on the subject of the slave trade, should my return be considered essential to carrying the abolition into effect, I would be at my post by the middle of December. I also promised Captain Scobell, that I should wait for his return, and could not feel justified in disappointing him. And now, my good sir, when you consider how

\* Alluding to Dunbar and another.

† This appears to be a fresh indictment subsequent to his pardon.

‡ A place within the local limits of the Colony.

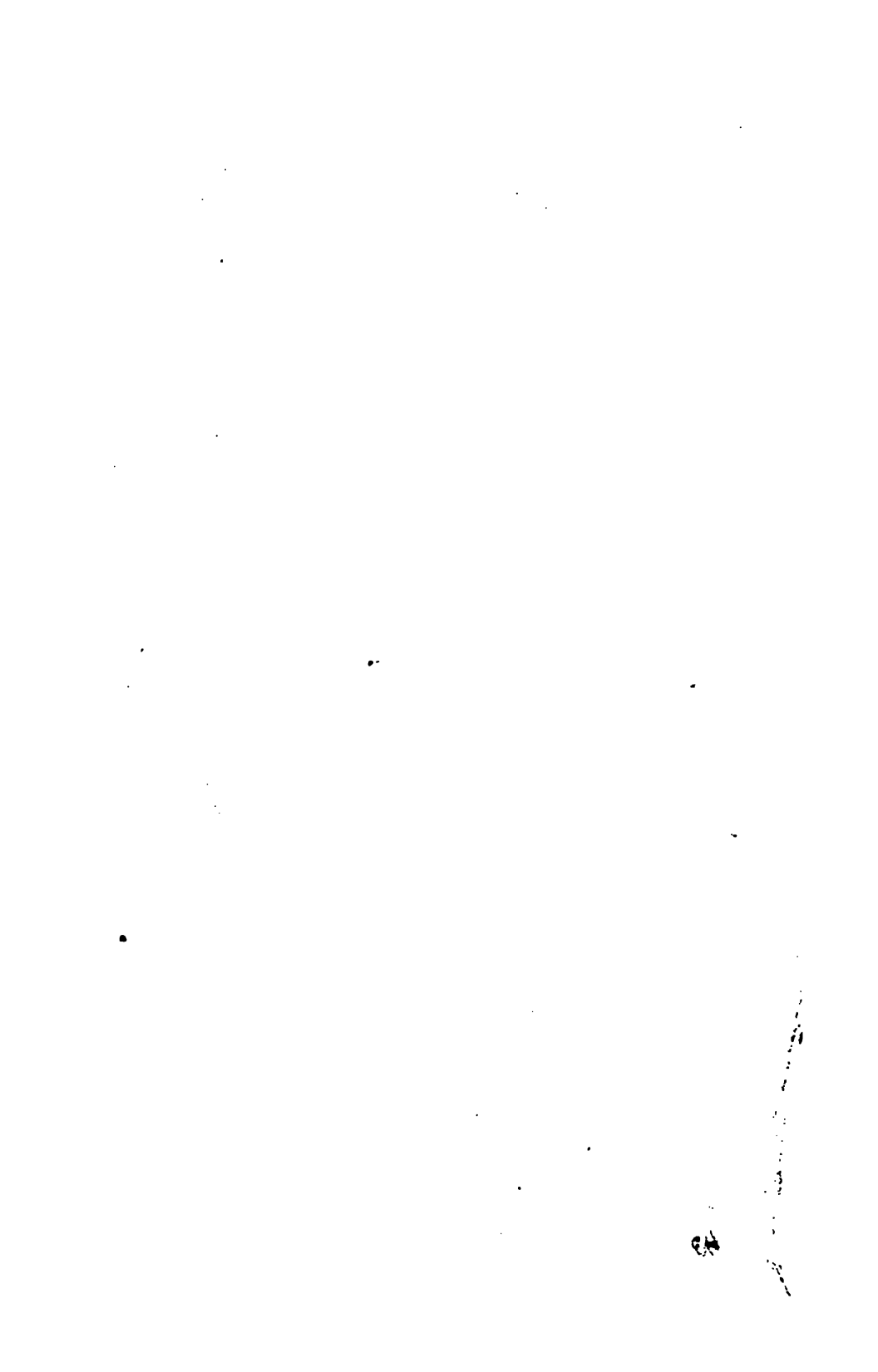
wonderfully the Almighty has preserved my life, and spared my health, with the weight that I have about my neck, you would consider me unjustifiable in hazarding a third wet season. Besides, when you consider all the present circumstances, there seems an interval of rest in the slave trade. Should it revive, I may be stronger to meet it. The difficulties and doubts that are now on my mind will be removed. I cannot further aid the Colony or assist your administration. The land-granting department is established; the law, the rule of evidence, the practice, the costs, and forms in the Courts, all regulated as in England, as far as circumstances will admit. Every salutary act for the Colony seems to be passed; no one thing seems to require my remaining; and unnecessarily to sacrifice my life to the climate would be insanity. My being in England, I should hope, would beneficially aid the abolition. I will try to make it advancement to the Colony; and under present circumstances I am confident it may be made serviceable to yourself. Thus every thing appears favourable to my departure, every thing unfavourable to my remaining; but the time or vessel is doubtful. Mr. Becket will be too soon, and I see no prospect but from Mr. Roach, who promises to be here in May. Should I live, that might answer for going to England; but arriving so late might prevent my being able to return by Christmas, which might be desirable on account of the sessions. Now, on all these points, I beg your friendly advice and assistance, as it will principally lead my determination,—I am,

My dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

(Signed) ROBERT THORPE.

THE END.











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